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A HISTORY OF THE

THIRTY YEARS' PEACE.

VOL. III.

A HISTORY

OF THE

THIRTY YEARS' PEACE.

A.D. 1816–1846.

By HARRIET MARTINEAU.

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HISTORY OF THE PEACE.

BOOK IV.—(*Continued.*)

CHAPTER VIII.

Renewal of the Bank Charter—India Company's Charter—Negro Slavery—Abolition Movements—Negro Emancipation—First of August 1834.

THERE were two matters of great importance which must be considered at this time, whoever might be in or out of power, and whatever might be happening, at home or abroad. The two great charters, of the India Company and of the Bank of England, were to expire in 1834, and it must be timely determined whether they were to be renewed, and on what conditions. As has been notified, a parliamentary committee had already been appointed, and had begun its work of inquiring into the claims and affairs of the India Company. On the 22nd of May 1832, the chancellor of the exchequer proposed a similar inquiry in regard to the Bank of England. This last committee was, however, a secret one, for the obvious reason that disclosures on currency subjects, for a succession of months, with uncertainty at the end of it, would embarrass all commercial transactions. The committee sat, and diligently pursued its inquiry during the rest of the session, offering its report on the 11th of August. This committee was appointed on the fifth day after the return of Lord Grey and his colleagues to power; and it began its abstract and passionless work while words were running high in the other House between Lords Kenyon and Grey, and while the remnant of anti-reforming peers were undergoing

defeat as often as they adventured a division on the clauses of the Reform Bill. Such were the days when the bank committee sat, and when the very eminent men who were in it were preparing a report of extraordinary value. They felt the seriousness of their work; and well they might. The last renewal of the exclusive privileges of the bank had taken place in 1800, when the term assigned was a year's notice after the 1st of August 1833; and during that interval what vicissitudes and alarms had taken place!—what warnings of the disastrous nature of errors in currency matters, and of the magnitude of the interests now to be involved in an engagement for another term of years! The distresses of 1814, the crisis of 1819, and the crash of 1825–6, were fresh in the recollection of several members of the committee, and a matter of deep interest to all; and under this stimulus, they so exerted themselves that their report is considered—in connection with the evidence on which it is founded—the most important instrument towards the establishment of sound principles of banking as yet offered to the government and people of England. Among others, there were on the committee, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Poulett Thomson, Sir Henry Parnell, Mr. John Smith, Mr. Baring, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bonham Carter, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—statesmen, financiers, economists, and practical men of business. What they had to investigate was this: whether the paper-money of London should be limited to the issues of one bank, or whether a competition of issues should be allowed; whether all the exclusive privileges of the Bank of England were necessary, supposing it to be still the only bank of issue in London; and what checks were desirable to secure the public from danger from banks of issue, and especially whether a periodical publication of accounts would be a benefit or a disadvantage. On these points, the committee gave a vast amount of information, without any imposition of decided opinions of their own. They did all that time and circumstances allowed in laying before parliament the fullest materials for a judgment, and in venturing to reveal the exact state of the affairs of the Bank of England, thereby breaking up the system of mystery which had hitherto

been one of the dangerous privileges of the bank corporation. Up to this date, the directors had preserved the most cautious secrecy about their affairs, declaring dividends, year after year, upon their own arbitrary judgment, without any sanction of publicity. Now, however, the House of Commons printed the report of the secret committee; and it was understood that darkness would never again be allowed to settle down on the transactions of the great corporation.

A new charter was granted, terminable 'at any time upon twelve months' notice to be given after the 1st of August 1855;' and the privileges of the bank might cease sooner, upon the fulfilment of certain conditions by the country; one of which was the repayment by parliament of upwards of eleven millions, owing by the public to the bank. The bank retained, under the new charter, the chief of its old privileges; and one principal new advantage in a restriction on all other banks, having more than six partners, from issuing notes or bills within sixty-five miles of London. A great convenience was also afforded to the bank by its notes, and the notes of its branches, being made a legal tender everywhere but at the bank and its branches. By this provision, the bank was saved the expense, inconvenience, and risk of having to keep up, all over the kingdom, stocks of bullion to meet any run which might occur in any direction, at any time. There was some alarm at first among half-informed people about this provision, which was regarded as countenancing a sort of inconvertible paper-currency; but the holders were in fact in exactly the same position as before in regard to the convertibility of the notes, while new facilities were, at the same time, added for obtaining cash in any of its forms from the bank, by the establishment of new branches. All branch notes were made payable only at their place of issue. Weekly returns of bullion and of notes in circulation were to be sent in to the chancellor of the exchequer, in order to publication in the *London Gazette* —a provision of publicity which has worked so well as to be carefully renewed, after ten years of trial. One-fourth of the debt due from the public to the bank was immediately paid, by an assignment of stock previously held by the commissioners of the national debt. In consideration

of its new privileges, the bank was to deduct £120,000 per annum from its charge for the business of conducting the national debt affairs. At the time of this inquiry, the total receipts of the bank for the year were £1,689,176; and its expenses somewhat under £500,000; leaving £1,164,235 to be divided among the proprietors. The establishment employed about 1,000 persons, and supported 193 pensioners; the average receipts of the 1,000 functionaries being £225 each, and those of the pensioners £161 each. Such were the state and constitution of the Bank of England on the granting of the new charter of 1834. It will be seen hereafter how the never-ceasing changes of commercial affairs, and the imperfection of the best knowledge on the great subject of the circulating medium, compelled in ten years a remodelling of the constitution of the bank, with a provision for another change, if necessary, in ten years more. For these further arrangements, an essential preparation was made by the new provision for publicity; by the establishment of more branches, with better security against a disastrous local drain; and by the thought and knowledge brought to bear upon the subject in the investigations and discussions of 1832 and 1833.

A more striking change than any in the constitution of the bank could be to society at large took place at the same time. For nearly two centuries and a half, the merchant-vessels of the East India Company had traversed the seas, before the eyes of the world. This magnificent association had formed the link between the barbarism of the past and distant, and the civilisation of the future in its home; and now it was to be quietly let drop as useless —the east and the west having come into a communication which should now be left free. The commerce of this corporation, which had once been altogether a facility, had become a monopoly; and the changes of centuries required that it should be broken up. So the Company remain princes, but no longer merchant-princes. About a quarter of a century before the time now under notice, a Liverpool merchant, the most honoured of his class, Mr. William Rathbone, was in London, and struck with the spectacle of the Company's shipping, he inquired of a London merchant at his elbow, why such a trade—a trade so great

and so capable of unlimited expansion—was quietly left to be the property of a corporation. His friend replied by convincing him of the overwhelming power of the Company in London, under whose shadow no discontent could stir with impunity; and the two agreed that whenever any movement was made, it must be in the provinces. Mr. Rathbone was not a man to loiter over any work which he saw ought to be done. He stirred up Liverpool, Glasgow, Paisley, and Manchester, to demand an opening of the trade; and the movement had proceeded so far before 1813, when the Company's charter was to expire, that a considerable relaxation of the monopoly was then obtained. From that time British merchants were permitted to trade to the territories of the Company, and India generally, though none but the Company might traffic with China. During the next twenty years, the doctrine of free-trade had been elaborated and partially practised; the demand for tea had largely increased in England; those who had visited the United States could tell what a variety of Chinese productions they had seen in the houses of the Salem merchants, and in the shops of New York, and how much they had heard of the desire of thickly-peopled China for a supply of European and American productions; and the demand for a complete opening of the eastern seas had become too strong to be resisted. By the charter of 1813, the Company had been bound to keep their territorial and commercial accounts separate; and on their first examination, it was clear that they could not for a moment compete with private merchants in supplying India with manufactured goods, to the advantage of both parties. In fifteen years, the Company's exports of manufactured cottons to India had dwindled to almost nothing, while those of private merchants exceeded in value a million and a half per annum, and were still on the increase. After all that the English public had been told of the immutability of Hindoo habits, and the impossibility of any great expansion of trade, it became clear that the Hindoos, like other people, would stretch out their hands to obtain good and comfortable things, if only such things were placed within their reach. Bishop Heber's journals were by this time published; and they told of the strong disposition of

both Hindoos and Mohammedans in India to imitate the English, and obtain whatever was necessary to enable them to assume an English mode of living; he tells of jackets and trousers, shoes and stockings, round hats, English furniture, French devices and mottoes on jewellery, English hardware, crockery, writing-desks, arms, and clothing—not only in and near Calcutta, but in remote provincial towns. This much having been proved, the commercial world did not attend to what the Company now said of the immutability of Chinese habits, and the impossibility of any great expansion of trade there. It was time to try. The Company took warning by their experience of the results of competition with private enterprise in India, and did not insist upon renewing the experiment in China. Their age as traders was past; and they now retired upon their territorial dignity, leaving a large section of the world open to British commerce. It was a striking event to a multitude of people at home, and to many abroad. Almost everybody reckoned on having cheap tea, and plenty of it; and some anticipated that a few houses in London and our principal ports might soon have curiosities to show like those of Salem and New York; elegant matting, a variety of serviceable silks, extraordinary toys, and Chinese copies of English prints—a miracle of painstaking. Many, it may be hoped, thought of the blessing to the Chinese of new means and opportunities of civilisation; and some, of the effect upon the relations of the whole world of the throwing open the intercourse between the east and the west, which, whether cursed with a war at the outset or not, was certainly necessary to an ultimate condition of fraternisation and peace. In this view, one point was of eminent interest to some of the best people living in the world. In these newly opened countries of the east, there are wide regions—broad belts of soil and climate—fitted for the production of sugar and cotton. It is the limitation of the area for the production of sugar and cotton which protracts the existence of negro slavery. It is well to use all possible means of appeal to the justice and humanity of men, to induce an abolition of negro slavery; but here was another opening for hope and enterprise. If slavery were not abolished sooner, it certainly

must be by a cheaper production of sugar and cotton in the east by free labour than can be accomplished in the west by slave labour. No such possibility existed while the India Company held the east in their hand; but now the prospect seemed to be opening; and in this view, again, the date of the expiration of the Company's charter might be one of high importance in the history of the world.

By the act of 1833, the charter was renewed for twenty years, during which time the territorial government remains in the hands of the Company. From the 22nd of April 1834, the China and tea trade of the Company was to cease, and all its commercial concerns were to be wound up, and its commercial property sold. All the restrictions which prevented the free admission of Europeans, and their free residence in India, were repealed; and equality of claim to office and employment between natives and foreigners was decreed. There was to be no distinction on account of race, colour, or religion. From that day, new hopes have been dawning upon the east; and it is now universally understood that the great work to be done in India is to raise the native population by educational methods, and by a just administration of our power, and not, as it once was, to keep them down by force—whether for their own sake or ours. As for the commercial results of the new charter, the number of ships which passed to and fro increased year by year, even before the introduction of steam-navigation into those seas. In ten years, the trade with China had doubled, and the value of British and Irish exports to India and Ceylon had increased from two millions and a half to six millions and nearly a half.

During the same period, as is observed in the commercial registers of the time, the value of the exports to the West Indies had declined. These colonies were in a disturbed and unsatisfactory state. For some years, the experiment of a gradual preparation of the slave for freedom had been going on; and with the inevitable result of failure. The slaves were informed by the arrival of successive orders in council, by the appointment of protectors of slaves, and by the trial of a few slave causes, that they had rights; and when a man of any colour once knows to a certainty that he has rights which are withheld

from him by parties close at hand, he is never contented again in his wronged condition. The planters were as restless in their way as the slaves. They resented the orders in council, and everything in the shape of admonition from home, as an unwarrantable interference with their management of their property; and they refused the slave registration and other observances prescribed by government. The language in their assemblies was audaciously disrespectful and petulant; and in Trinidad there was a proposition that the inhabitants should refuse to pay taxes till the last order in council was rescinded. In December 1831, a formidable insurrection broke out in Jamaica, which occasioned suspension of business and other loss, and was put down only by martial law; and in the following April the West India merchants in London endeavoured to make government liable for the losses thus incurred, and for all, which, in the opinion of the planters, could be traced to the operation of the orders, or of other movements in behalf of the slave. When, at this meeting, the responsibility for all disorders was thrown upon the British government, and protests and claims were sent in to the colonial secretary, 'in consequence of the measures pursued by his majesty's ministers,' it was clear that a final settlement of the great question was at hand. It was now too late to desert the cause of the slaves, and hand them over to the arbitrary management of their owners. There must be a final issue; and the planters were bringing it on as fast as they could. If they had not done so, events would. In the three years from 1828, the production of sugar had so far lessened as that the imports in England had sunk from 198,400 tons to 185,660 tons. The planters believed that they could recover their ground if England would give them aid, and only leave them to manage their slaves in their own way; while England felt, not only that the negroes were fellow-subjects as well as the whites, but that no power on earth could roll back the years so as to reinstate the planters in their former position. By their present conduct, the West India merchants and proprietors hurried on the crisis at a rate not dreamed of by the friends of the negro at home.

On the 17th of April, the Earl of Harewood presented

to the House of Lords a petition from persons interested in the colonies, for a full parliamentary inquiry into the laws, usages, and condition of the West India colonies, their past improvements, and possible future ameliorations —due regard being had to 'the best interests of the slaves themselves, and the rights of private property.' The committee was granted; and the last order in council was suspended for the time. On the 24th of May, the lord chancellor presented a petition from 135,000 persons, resident in and near London, praying for the speedy abolition of slavery, and that no delay might be caused by the appointment of the West India committee. Lord Suffield followed with twenty-one petitions to the same purpose. While these were discussed in the one House, Mr. T. Fowell Buxton was moving in the other for a select committee to prepare for the extinction of slavery in the British dominions at the earliest possible moment. It is painful now to read the debate on this occasion, not only on account of the perpetual pleas which make the reader blush for the conscience of the legislature—pleas of the good food, light work, and relief from responsibility, of the slaves, and of their enjoyment of the blessings of Christianity—but on account of the timidity and supineness of many who called themselves the friends of the negroes. Mr. Buxton had a hard battle to fight; but he stood his ground. He must have been aware that he understood the matter, while his opponents, of all parties, did not. He knew that the abolition of slavery was inevitable; and that the most speedy abolition would be the safest for all parties. He knew that a gradual preparation of a slave for freedom was an impossible thing; he knew that to leave the matter in the hands of the government was to give up the cause; he knew that to revert to the resolutions of the 15th of May 1823, was to acquiesce in another nine years' delay; he knew that to mix up in the same motion the questions of emancipation and of compensation to the planters would be to expose the great moral to all the risks of the minor financial question; and he therefore stood firm, amidst the entreaties of friends, the mockery of foes, and the somewhat contemptuous displeasure of the ministers, who on this occasion could not be ranked either

with friends or foes. Lord Althorp, unaware what a work he and his colleagues were destined to do in a few short months, 'would not pledge himself to any immediate abolition of slavery, because he did not think that the slave-population was in a situation to receive that boon beneficially for themselves; but he thought that the legislature might employ itself most usefully in bringing the slaves to such a state of moral feeling as would be suitable to the proposed alteration in their condition;' and he moved an amendment on Mr. Buxton's motion, in favour of 'conformity with the resolutions of this House of the 15th of May 1823.' Thus far were our statesmen behind the time, that one of the most honest, one of the most sensitive to the claims of justice, was unaware that the only possible education for the use of rights is in the exercise of the rights themselves, and was unashamed to revert to the barren resolutions of nine years before. In that spirit of rectitude which includes the truest mercy, Mr. Buxton refused to surrender his motion, even if he should vote alone. Ninety, however, voted on his side, and 163 on the other. This majority of 73 on Lord Althorp's side was not so large as was expected; and it was probably outnumbered, a hundred times over, by the converts to Mr. Buxton's view outside the House, who could bring an effectual force to bear on the government.

This question is one which implicates not two quarters of the world only, but three—not Europe and Africa only, but America. It is necessary to survey the whole area of the operation of negro slavery, in order to give the true history of any one part. There was at this date an infant movement in the United States which was destined to signalise our century as the Reformation distinguished its own age. Some who live nearest to the cradle of this reformation are only now—five-and-twenty years after its birth—beginning to perceive with any clearness the magnitude of the event; but so it is with all the great transitions in the world. While the Reformation was going on, multitudes of ordinary people in Germany were living on as usual, in unconsciousness that anything remarkable was befalling the world; 'likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they

bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;' and if any stranger had inquired of them about the new prophet and his doctrine, they would have denied that such existed, till the fire-shower of Luther's denunciations came to burn up the superstitions of the age. Thus it was now in the United States, where the gibbet and the tar-kettle and the cow-hide were preparing for the patriots of the community; and the time was drawing on, when the rights of petition to congress, of the press, and of free speech, were to be suspended, in order to be restored with increased security, for the object of freeing the soil from negro slavery. Before this could happen, some noble hearts must be broken, some precious lives sacrificed, some public halls burned, and many private dwellings laid waste; but the end was decreed, and the beginning was now made. In 1830, two young men had been wont to walk across the common at Boston, and discuss the right way of setting about the abolition of slavery in America; and they and another—poor and obscure, all three of them—had met in a garret, and there, with their feet upon a wood-pile, and by the light of a single candle, they had solemnly resolved steadfastly to measure their moral force against the hideous evil. It has fallen to them and their followers to contend for a wider emancipation than that of the negroes—to be the champions, in the New World, of freedom of opinion, speech, and the press; and before their work—now secure, but not fully accomplished—is finally dismissed from their hands, it may appear that yet other kinds of freedom have been brought in and established by them. The conflict between the powers of light and darkness, of liberty and tyranny, in the United States, is now, in the middle of the century, approaching its issue. At the time when Mr. Buxton stood up in the British House of Commons, refusing to yield his point, an indomitable brother-reformer over the seas had presented his manifesto in one of the finest declarations ever given to the world. No one knew better than Mr. Buxton, and no one would have been more eager to explain the fact, that the brother-spirit over the seas had infinitely the harder lot, and the most arduous work, of the two for his portion. It was only by living on bread and water that

the confessor of this mighty cause could obtain means to publish his paper. 'When it sold particularly well,' says his partner in the sacrifice, 'we treated ourselves with a bowl of milk.' In the small, shabby first sheet of *The Liberator*, printed with old types, we find the manifesto which will not be forgotten while the Anglo-Saxon liberties and language last. 'I am aware,' says Garrison, 'that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I *will* be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—AND I WILL BE HEARD. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead. It is pretended that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective, and the precipitancy of my measures. The charge is not true. On this question my influence, humble as it is, is felt at this moment to a considerable extent, and shall be felt in coming years—not perniciously, but beneficially—not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear witness that I was right. I desire to thank God that He enables me to disregard the fear of man, and to speak His truth in its simplicity and power.' There were persons in the House of Commons who exclaimed against coarseness and precipitancy, and called out for soft words, and a mincing gait towards the object—the gaze reverting to the resolutions of nine years before. But the men who understood the case knew that events—and not any impulse of impatient minds—now called for a thundering utterance, and a tread that should shake the ground. The demand for liberty was now one which could not be neglected. The property question might be considered too; but it must not be permitted to cause the delay of the greater argument. Though defeated on the division, Mr. Buxton had made this clear; and from that day there was no more halting on either shore of the Atlantic.

A vote of relief in money to the West India colonies, on account of a destructive hurricane in Barbadoes, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia, was now made to include Jamaica, on account of the recent insurrection, and raised from £100,000 to £1,000,000. The chancellor of the exchequer

declared that it would require £800,000 to rebuild the premises destroyed by the insurgent slaves. It was in this same year that the slaves in America heard of Garrison's manifesto; and from that time they ceased to rise. Till then, revolts had been frequent—several taking place every year. Since Garrison, the 'peace-man,' has arisen in their behalf, there has not been one.

By the 14th of the next May, the government had declared that they had found the pressure of public opinion on the subject of slavery too strong to be resisted; and they had brought forward, by the mouth of Mr. Stanley—who had become colonial secretary—a series of resolutions, which were to be debated on the 30th of the same month. In the speech of the secretary, introducing the resolutions, nothing is more remarkable than the narrative given of West India distress; a distress so frequently recurring, so incessantly complained of, in all conditions of war and peace, and of changing seasons, as to show that the secret of prosperity does not lie in slavery, and that there was some fatal fault in the system which the planters were so unwilling to have touched. There was nothing in this narrative to surprise the economists, in or out of the House; and the economists and the friends of the negro, and the most enlightened of the advocates of the planters, were alike sorry to see in the resolutions a clinging to the unsound method of 'gradualism' in the abolition of slavery. It was proposed that all children born after the passing of any act of emancipation, and all that should be under six years old at the time of its passage, should be declared free, that all others, then slaves, should be registered as apprenticed labourers, being considered free, except for the restriction of being compelled to labour for their present owners, under conditions, and for a space of time to be determined by parliament; that a loan, not exceeding £15,000,000 should be offered to the planters; and that parliament should provide for the expense of a local magistracy, and of means of education and religious training of the negroes.

Mr. Buxton declared at once against the compulsory apprenticeship, as a device pregnant with mischief. He was joined by one who had been a member of the govern-

ment, Lord Howick, who had resigned office from his inability to countenance this provision, and his reluctance to introduce confusion into the government by his opposition, otherwise than as an independent member of the House. This apprenticeship arrangement was one great difficulty, and the loan was another. The planters and their advocates considered the amount a mere pittance, and yet were sure they could never repay it. With a good grace, the loan of fifteen millions was converted into a gift of twenty millions; and the term of apprenticeship was reduced. Mr. Buxton was so well supported in his opposition, that government had no choice but to yield. The field-slaves were to have been apprenticed for twelve years, and the house-slaves for seven: their terms were now reduced to seven and five. As to the money part of the affair, there were many who saw and declared that, in strict principle, there could be no claim for compensation for deprivation of that which, from its very nature, never could have been property; and such opposed any payment at all to the planters, as they would have refused to purchase a slave who could be freed without. But the greater number, seeing how long the law had recognised human beings as property, and on how bare a legal basis all right to property rests, were willing to avoid subtle controversy, and to close the dispute rather with generous concession than with rigidity; and the gift of twenty millions was voted with an alacrity which must ever be considered a remarkable and honourable sign of the times. The generous acquiescence of the people under this prodigious increase of their burdens has caused the moralists of other nations to declare that the British act of emancipation stands alone for moral grandeur in the history of the world; while those of other nations who do not happen to be moralists, see in it only an inexplicable hypocrisy, or obscure process of self-interest.

On the 30th of August 1833, the Emancipation Act passed the Lords. The name, and much of the substance of slavery was to expire on the 1st of August 1834. The young children were then to be free; and the government fondly hoped, against the warnings of those who understood the second nature which overgrows the first

in the holders of irresponsible power, that the parents would, from the same hour, be morally and civilly free—bound only in the salutary obligations to virtuous labour. However that might be, the day was within view when all should be wholly free. To her great honour—and not the less because the act proved to be one of true policy—Antigua surrendered the right of apprenticeship, and set her slaves wholly free on the appointed day. Elsewhere, the arrangement worked so ill—the oppression of the negroes was so gross, and to them in their transition state so intolerable—the perplexities were so many, and so difficult to deal with—that government was soon convinced that 'gradualism' was as impracticable under the name of freedom, as of slavery: in three years, the term of apprenticeship was shortened; and presently afterwards the arrangement was relinquished altogether.

The season of emancipation was dreaded by some of the slaveholders, who had spent all their lives in fear of negro risings. To others it appeared that the danger of revolt was when the negroes were suffering under tyranny, and not when they were relieved from it. On both shores of the Atlantic, however, expectation stood on tiptoe to watch the moment which should give freedom to 800,000 of the enslaved race. The Carolina planter looked well to his negro quarter, to see that his 'hands' were not abroad after dark. Garrison and his band sat waiting for tidings—with more faith in the negro temper than anybody else, but still with some anxiety for the cause. The British parliament looked benevolently forth, in the consciousness of having done an act which should stand alone in the history of the world. The British peasant thought affectionately of the black brethren whom he, as a freeman and a tax-payer, had helped to release from bondage. And when the tidings came—the narrative of how the great day had passed over—there was such joy as is seldom excited by one event among opposite interests. Garrison and his band were as much relieved as the Carolina planter; and the English peasant was as proud and pleased as the British parliament. The 1st of August fell on a Friday; and there was to be holiday from the Thursday night till Monday. The missionaries did their

duty well; and they completely succeeded in impressing the people with a sense of the solemnity of the occasion. The arrival of that midnight in the island of Antigua, where the negroes where to be wholly free at once, was an event which cannot be read of without a throbbing of the heart. It was to the negroes their passover-night. They were all collected in their chapels—the Wesleyans keeping watch-night in the chapels throughout the island. The pastors recommended to the people to receive the blessing in silence and on their knees. At the first stroke of midnight from the great cathedral-bell, all fell on their knees, and nothing was heard but the slow tolling bell, and some struggling sobs in the intervals. The silence lasted for a few moments after the final stroke, when a peal of awful thunder rattled through the sky, and the flash of lightning seemed to put out the lamps in the chapels. Then the kneeling crowd sprang to their feet, and gave voice to their passionate emotions—such voice as might be expected from this excitable people. Some tossed up their free arms, and groaned away at once the heart's burden of a life. Families and neighbours opened their arms to each other. Some prayed aloud, after the lead of their pastors, that they might be free indeed; and a voice was heard in thanksgiving for a real Sabbath now, when the wicked should cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest, and the voice of the oppressor should be no more heard, and the servant should be free from his master. In some of the chapels the noble spectacle was seen of the masters attending with their negroes, and, when the clock had struck, shaking hands with them, and wishing them joy. The rest of the holiday was spent partly in mirth, as was right, and much of it in listening to the addresses of the missionaries, who urged upon them with much force, and in the utmost detail, the duties of sobriety and diligence, and harmony with their employers. On the Monday morning, they went to work—that work which they were proud of now, as it was for wages.

Fair as was this promise, and well as the conduct of the negroes has justified the highest expectations of their most sanguine friends, no reasonable persons were so sanguine

as to suppose that all parties would be satisfied—that an act of parliament could neutralise all the evil results of an iniquity that was centuries old—that the striking of that cathedral clock was to silence all discontents for the future as well as the past. From the nature of things it could not be so. The planter could not at the striking of that clock, put off his habits of command, and his lifelong associations of inferiority with the negro race. He could not, in a moment or a year, become an economist, a practical man, carrying on his business with the close attention and care and thrifty skill held necessary in the employers of free labour elsewhere. And the negroes would certainly work in a very different way, and to a very different amount henceforth. The husband and father might, and no doubt would, accomplish much more actual work between year's end and year's end; but some of it would be for himself—on ground of his own; and the women would be almost universally withdrawn from field-labour; and they would keep their children under their own care at home. As the possession of land was, in the eyes of negroes, the symbol of all earthly power and privilege, it was certain that their great ambition would be to buy land; and thus, again, more labour would be withdrawn from the existing estates. And these estates were in that bad state of tillage which always co-exists with slave-labour; and the conditions were thus unfavourable to a change of system. The probability seemed to many to be that there would be a decline in the production of sugar, and distress among the planters, not remediable by any kind or degree of aid from England, ending probably in a transfer of the estates from the representatives of the old system to those of the new. A tone of fretful triumph would have to be borne with for a time from the enemies of emancipation; and, perhaps, a temporary deficiency of sugar—entailing further sacrifice on the English working-classes who had so cheerfully undertaken their share of the twenty millions of compensation; and, in some future time, every white might have sold his plantation to a black or mulatto capitalist. There would be much evil in all this, if it should happen; but after so long and grievous a sin, some retributive penalty must be expected;

and there were bright points both in the near and distant prospects. The negress was now under the protection of a husband, and had a home in which to labour and rest. Christianity could now be preached, without dread and without omission. While regretting any decline in the outward fortunes of the planters, no considerate person could for a moment put those outward fortunes into the scale against the moral and material interests of the vast majority of residents in the West Indies; and as for the supply of sugar, there is a broad belt surrounding the world—here studded with South American ranchos, there feathered with African palms, and beyond, watered by the rivers of India, and strewn with the islands of the eastern archipelago—where sugar enough may be grown for the needs of the whole race. The centuries bring with them their own resources. Ours brought a rich one in the insight and impulse to extinguish a mighty sin. Necessity and justice were seen and heard to demand it; the thing was done; and necessity and justice may always be trusted to vindicate themselves.

CHAPTER IX.

Irish Church—Prosecution of O'Connell—Irish outrage—Royal Notice of Tithes—First and Second Acts of 1832—Act of 1833—Tardy Truth about Tithes—Proposed Act of 1834—Bill lost—Irish Ecclesiastical Commission—Irish Census-reductions—Appropriation Doctrine—Delays—Appropriation refused—Irish Church Temporalities Bill passes—Official changes—Mr. Ward's Critical Motion—King's Declaration—Commission of Inquiry—Coercion Bill—Negotiation with Mr. O'Connell—Mr. Littleton's Explanation—Resignation of Lord Althorp—Of Lord Grey—Lord Grey's Farewell—His Political Character.

Thus far the Whig ministry had wrought and prospered well. They had undertaken their great works with a clear view of what ought to be done, and a determination to do it; or, if they at any time fell short in either of these requisites, the sympathy or opposition of the liberal party soon brought them up again. Among many defi-

ciencies and weaknesses which they were now to exhibit, the most fatal, and one of the most inexcusable, was in regard to Ireland. It required no miraculous wisdom to see that Catholic emancipation would not tranquillise Ireland while she suffered under the burden of what the *Times* called 'too much Church.' In the most orderly state of society in any country, it could not be expected that between six and seven millions of inhabitants of one religious faith would pay a portion of their produce to support a Church which included only a few hundred thousands—a Church which they conscientiously disapproved, and whose funds they saw to be ample, while their own priesthood had nothing to depend on but the precarious contributions of their flocks. On the one hand was a Church numbering 853,000, with four archbishops, eighteen bishops, and a law which authorised its clergy to derive an essential part of their incomes from tithes; and this in a country where tillage was the almost universal means of subsistence, and the division of the land was so minute that the tithe-collectors seemed never to have done making their demands of shillings and half-pence. On the other hand, there was a Church including six millions and a half of members, without aid from government, without countenance from the law; with a multitudinous priesthood who lived with the poor and like the poor; and from these poor was the tithe extorted by perpetually recurring applications—applications backed by soldiery and armed police, who carried off the pig, or the sack of potatoes, or the money-fee which the peasant desired to offer to his own priest. It required no miraculous wisdom to see that the long-exasperated Irish must consider this management as religious persecution, and feel that Catholic emancipation was not yet complete. A very ordinary foresight would have shown that it would soon be found impossible to collect tithe in Ireland; and further, that it must soon be acknowledged by the whole world at home, as it had long been declared by the whole world abroad, that the maintenance of the establishment in Ireland was an insult and injury which no nation could be expected to endure, and which must preclude all chance of peace till it should be abolished in its form of a dominant Church. The Whig

ministers were not only without the miraculous wisdom, but they were without the ordinary foresight. They, Whigs as they were, were blinded by that same superstitious dread of changing the law which had, time after time, been the destruction of their opponents. They, Whigs as they were, seemed to have forgotten that no human law can be made for eternity—that no age or generation can bind down a future age or generation to its own arrangements, or legislate in a spirit of prophecy. They whose ancestors had declared these truths in 1688, and as often since as any great reform had been needed—they, who had dissolved the laws which gave seats in parliament as a property to individuals, and the negro as a property to his white fellow-man, pleaded now, while Ireland was convulsed from end to end with the Church question, that the Church in Ireland could never be touched, because its establishment and revenues were guaranteed by law. If it was asked to whom were this establishment and these revenues guaranteed, it was necessary to dismiss the abstraction called the Church, and to reply, either the worshippers or their clergy; and the question then was, whether means of worship could not be provided for the one, and an honourable subsistence for the other, by some method less objectionable than taking by force the tenth potato and the tenth peat from the Catholic peasant, and parading the Church of the small minority before the eyes of the vast majority as the pensioned favourite of the state. If the Whig ministers had had sagacity to see the untenable nature of the Irish establishment, and courage to propose its reduction to the proper condition of a Protestant denomination, they would have gained honours even nobler than those which they won by parliamentary reform. It is highly probable that Ireland would have been by this time comparatively at ease; for the ministers might apparently have carried such a measure at the outset of their legislation for Ireland, when their power was at its height, and the question of Church reform in England was discussed with a freedom and boldness which soon disappeared. If not, however—if they had failed and gone out upon this question—they would have entitled themselves to the eternal

gratitude of the nation, and of so much of the world at large as is interested in the interior peace and prosperity of the British Empire. But they did not see nor understand their opportunity. The phantom of the impersonal Church, and its shadowy train of legal guarantees, was before them, so as to shut out the realities of the case—the substantial interests of the Protestant religion, and the weighty facts that many of the churches were empty, the numbers of Protestants stationary or decreasing, and the working clergy actually living upon alms. The administration tried this and that and the other small method of dealing with the difficulty; at what expense of delay, contention, and ultimate partial yielding, we shall hereafter see. 'Of this,' said their friends at the time, by the most calm and moderate of their organs, 'there can be no doubt—the only way to afford her [the Irish Church] the least chance of a permanent existence, is to abolish tithes entirely, and to cut down her other emoluments very low indeed; that is to say, to reduce them until they amount to no more than a fair equivalent for the services which she can render in return for them.'

In 1831, the state of Ireland seemed to be growing daily worse in regard to violence. There was a conflict of forces between the lord-lieutenant and Mr. O'Connell. The lord-lieutenant issued proclamations against a certain order of public meetings. O'Connell and his friends disobeyed the proclamation, and were brought to trial. Delays and difficulties were introduced into the legal process, as is usual in Ireland; but the matter ended in O'Connell and his comrades pleading guilty to the first fourteen counts in the indictment, which charged them with holding meetings in violation of various proclamations. The attorney-general was satisfied, and withdrew the remaining counts. Mr. O'Connell denied in the newspapers that he had pleaded guilty; and declared that he had allowed judgment to go by default, in order to plead before the House of Lords, through the twelve judges—before which time, he hoped, the act under which he was prosecuted would expire. As it was asserted and proved in the House of Commons that he had actually pleaded guilty, and that nothing remained but for sentence to be

pronounced against him, his followers, in their amazement at such a fall, resorted to the supposition that some kind of compromise had taken place between himself and the government and that the liberator had humbled himself in order to obtain some boon for Ireland. The supposition grew to a rumour; and the rumour spread to the friends and opponents of the ministers in parliament; and, though it was promptly met, it was never again extinguished. Whether it was through indolence, carelessness, timidity, or temporary convenience, certain it was that the Whig government brought on itself, for a course of years, the charge of compromise with O'Connell, after repeated proofs of his utter unworthiness of all trust, and therefore of all countenance as the representative of his country. On the present occasion, Mr. Stanley, secretary for Ireland, was questioned in the House about the transactions of government with Mr. O'Connell; and his reply was express and clear. He would not say that Mr. O'Connell's friends had not endeavoured to make terms for him; but the reply of government had been that Mr. O'Connell's conduct had not entitled him to any consideration, and 'the law must take its course'—'judgment should be pressed against him;' the crown had 'procured a verdict against Mr. O'Connell, and it would, undoubtedly, call him up to receive judgment upon it.' Within a fortnight after, a ridiculous scene took place in the House. Mr. O'Connell asked the secretary for Ireland on what ground he had asserted that friends of his had endeavoured to make terms for him. 'There could be no delicacy in disclosing their names, because if they were accredited agents, he—on the supposition the principal—asked for publicity; and if they were not his agents, it was but common justice to hold them up as impostors.' Again Mr. Stanley's answer was express and clear. A letter had been laid before him which proposed terms, to induce the Irish government to forego the prosecution; the letter being dictated by Mr. O'Connell himself to his son-in-law, and enclosed in one from his son. The House received this explanation with shouts of laughter; and the shouts were renewed when Mr. O'Connell said that 'he could not but admit that his question had been answered most satisfactorily by the right honourable gentleman.'

The terms proposed were, as Mr. O'Connell now declared, that he should forego his agitation for the repeal of the union, which he regarded only as means to an end, if the government would, in the first place, drop the prosecution, and next propose good measures for Ireland. The answer was, 'that no such compromise would be for a moment entertained by the Irish government, and that the law must take its course.' It is difficult to account for a self-exposure so audacious as this of O'Connell, on any other supposition than that he wished to advertise his readiness to be negotiated with, and to surrender his repeal agitation on sufficient inducement. He had long before so surrendered all pretensions to honour, and shown himself so incapable of conceiving of honour, that he could go through a scene like this of the 28th of February 1831, with less embarrassment than any other man. The misfortune of the case to the government was, that it did not redeem the pledge given by Mr. Stanley. The law did not take its course; Mr. O'Connell was not brought up for judgment. Time passed on; the act under which he was convicted expired; and when it was defunct, the ministers considered that it would be ungracious to inflict the penalties it decreed.

From week to week of this session, the outrages in Ireland grew worse. Tithe-collectors were murdered in some places; in others, they were dragged from their beds, and laid in a ditch to have their ears cut off. Five of the police were shot dead at once by a party in ambush. The peasantry declared against pastures, and broke up grass-lands in broad day. Cattle were driven off, lest the owners should pay tithe upon them. A committee of Roman Catholic priests, assembled at Ennis for the promotion of order and peace, broke up with expressions of despair. O'Connell attended some of the trials in May, before a special commission issued for the purpose; and he took the opportunity of making matters worse by addressing the people in speeches, in which he told them that many of the convicted peasants would have been acquitted if fairly tried, but that the juries were afraid to acquit. He charged his hearers with—not crime, but—indiscretion, and advised them to deliver up their arms,

not because the law required it, but because they might thus mollify the government, and purchase leniency for their comrades who had been caught. Towards the end of the month, there was a fight between the police and the peasants, at Castle Pollard, in Westmeath, on occasion of an attempted rescue. The chief constable was knocked down; the police fired, and nine or ten persons were killed. The police were tried for manslaughter, on the prosecution of the government; and O'Connell found matter of complaint even in this, after the men were acquitted, alleging that the prosecutions would have been fairer, if left to be instituted by the families of the slaughtered men. If they had been so left, his complaints of the apathy of the government would have been more formidable still. In June, an affair happened at Newtownbarry, in Wexford, which shows what was the position of the Church in the Catholic districts of Ireland at that time. On the 18th of June, which was market-day, some cattle were to be sold which had been impounded for tithe-payment. The following placard was on the walls of the town: 'Inhabitants, &c., &c.—There will be an end of church plunder; your pot, blanket, and pig will not hereafter be sold by auction, to support in luxury, idleness and ease, persons who endeavour to make it appear that it is essential to the peace and prosperity of the country, and your eternal salvation, while the most of you are starving. Attend to an auction of your neighbour's cattle, seized for tithe by the Rev. Alexander M'Clintock.' The yeomanry were on the alert to assist the police. As soon as the sale began, it merged into a fight; and twelve of the Catholic mob were killed. The consequent law proceedings were baffled and rendered fruitless by trick and timidity; but the affair was never forgotten. Before the year was out, the clergy had become afraid to ask, and their flocks to pay, their dues. As the year closed, soldiery assisted the police; but this only enlarged the area of the fights, and deepened their animosity. On one occasion, five of the Catholics were shot dead by the military; and a fortnight after, when a strong body of police were escorting a tithe-collecter, they were summoned to surrender him to popular vengeance: and, on their refusal, twelve of them were slaughtered in a lane, and

more left fearfully wounded. The captain of police, and his son, ten years old, were among the slain; and the pony which the boy rode was stabbed dead. The arms of the assailants were scythes, pitchforks, and bludgeons. A country lad, who appeared about thirteen years old, went from one to another of the prostrate police, and finding that five of them still breathed, made an end of them with his scythe. Such were the things that were done in the name, and for the alleged rights, of the religion which brought 'peace on earth, and goodwill to men.' As for the reviled clergy—the men who were declared to be living in luxury, idleness, and case,' and whose claim to tithe the Irish secretary was advocating in the House, as 'a matter of justice between man and man'—they were living, some in fear of a prison for debt, as they had received no money for many months; many more in fear of their neighbours; and not a few in fear of seeing their children starve before their eyes. Sometimes there would come in by night a pig, or a bag of meal, or a sack of potatoes, from some pitying friend; and by day, the clergyman might be seen digging 'for bare life' in his garden, with his shoeless children about him, while his wife was trying, within the house, whether the tattered clothes would bear another and another patch. Such was the system of 'justice between man and man' which Mr. Stanley would not at this time touch, because it was legal. If this was justice, on every or any hand, what then was injustice?

Some clergymen, however, differed from Mr. Stanley about perseverance in not touching the tithe system, on account of its justice. The Archbishop of Dublin declared that he spoke the opinion of many of his clerical brethren, as well as his own, when he said, in his evidence before the Lords' committee in this year: 'As for the continuance of the tithe system, it seems to me that it must be at the point of the bayonet—that it must be through a sort of chronic civil war. The ill feelings that have so long existed against it have been embodied in so organised a combination, that I conceive there would be continually breakings out of resistance, which must be kept down by a continuance of very severe measures, such as the government might indeed resolve to have recourse to for once, if

necessary, but would be very unwilling to resort to habitually, so as to keep the country under military government. And the most intelligent persons, and the most experienced I have conversed with, seem to think that nothing else will permanently secure the payment of tithes under the present system.' If this was true, tithes were condemned, in spite of their justice; for it could not be supposed that the preachers of a non-aggressive and non-resistant religion would desire to have their maintenance permanently collected at the point of the bayonet. There must, in that case, be more 'anxious thought' about meat and clothing than consisted with their profession. Already, indeed, the two faiths in Ireland seemed to have exchanged characters. It was the Protestant Church which displayed its protected, and endowed, and dominant hierarchy; and it was the Catholic faith which sent its priests from house to house, to preach glad tidings to the poor, accepting subsistence from the overflow of good-will, but demanding nothing in the name of human law.

In the royal speech, at the opening of the next session, some progress in ministerial opinion was apparent. The king requested the parliament to consider whether some improvement could not be made in the law regarding tithes in Ireland. In after years, there was abundant cause for lamentation that the advance was so small. Committees of inquiry were appointed by both Houses; and the evidence adduced was so astounding as to induce, in a multitude of minds, views of the Protestant Church in Ireland, which it is lamentable that the Government did not take heed to and act upon. Many friends of Ireland, as well as the Catholics themselves, desired, if tithes were not to be abolished, that they should be so appropriated as to yield benefit to the body who paid them, by means of a recurrence to the first principles of tithes. Originally, one-fourth of the tithe was devoted to the maintenance of the poor, and another to that of the places of worship; and it was now proposed, even in petitions to parliament, that this application should be made of the proceeds of tithe and of the lands of the Church in Ireland. Lord Grey took the earliest opportunity of intimating that he should strenuously oppose any proposition which went

to deprive the Church—that ever impersonal pleader!—'of her just rights.' Perhaps the best expression of the widely awakened feeling we have adverted to may be found in the speech of Lord Ebrington, who had himself been on the committee in the Commons, 'respecting the unfortunate anomaly which the Church of Ireland presented. He should not think any plan could lead to a final settlement of the question, which attempted to exclude the consideration of a thorough reform of the Church of Ireland. When he saw the clergy of that Church receiving salaries so disproportionate to the number of Protestants under their care, and when he saw that those salaries were paid chiefly by Roman Catholics, he looked upon the system as pregnant with injury to the cause of religion. He protested, therefore, against the number of the clergy being so disproportioned to their congregations; and he should be glad to see some more just distribution of the revenues of the Church, such as would afford a more adequate provision for the working clergy; and he should also be glad to see a state of things in which no part of the revenues of the Church should be diverted from the use of the Church. He could think no settlement of the existing complaints satisfactory which, with a due regard to all existing interests—for God forbid that they should attempt to strip any man of that which of right belonged to him—did not contemplate the reduction of the Church of Ireland to a condition better proportioned to the wants of the Protestant inhabitants.' Such was the view brought out of committee by as thoroughgoing a friend of the Whig administration as sat in the House.

There was now no time to be lost. The Irish recusants knew to a man, that the Royal speech had recommended to parliament a consideration of the tithe system; and they took this for a Royal condemnation of tithe paying. They knew before February was out that the parliamentary committees had reported that nothing would avail short of 'a complete extinction of tithes' by commutation for a charge upon the land; and these things were considered warrant enough for a refusal to pay tithe at all, and for persecution of those who did pay. An archdeacon in the neighbourhood of Cashel hoped to establish a commutation

with his parishioners; but now they refused his terms, came up to him in a field in sight of his own house—a field where several persons were ploughing, who took no notice of the transaction—and stoned him till his head was beaten to pieces. If any resident, pressed by his pastor or by conscience, or by fear of the law, paid the smallest amount of tithe in the most secret manner, his cattle were houghed in the night, or his house was burnt over his head, or his flock of sheep was hunted over a precipice, and lay a crushed heap in the morning. There was a sound of a horn, at that time, which made men's flesh creep, whether it was heard by night or day; for those who took upon them to extinguish tithes now boldly assembled their numbers by the sound of the horn; and all who heard it knew that murder or mutilation or arson was going to be perpetrated. Captures, special commissions, and trials were useless. Witnesses dared not give evidence; jurors dared not attend. Magistrates and police were multiplied; but the thing needed was a removal of the grievance, which was real enough, however atrociously avenged. On the very chapels, notices were now posted by the insurgents, and no man dared to take them down. There was indeed no time to lose.

The clergy naturally ceased to demand their dues; but even those of them who had anything to live upon, found that they were not to be left in peace. It seemed to be intended to drive them from the country. If they had cows, nobody could be found to milk them. Tradesmen who supplied articles to clergymen, found that nobody would buy of them, or even sell to them. Throughout the Catholic rural districts of Ireland, the clergy were dependent now upon the government, or upon private charity, for mere sustenance; while large county meetings in Carlow, Cork, and elsewhere, were passing resolutions, and issuing addresses which were almost alike in matter and form, and of which the following is a fair specimen: 'Resolved, that it is a glaring wrong to compel an impoverished Catholic people to support in pampered luxury the richest clergy in the world—a clergy from whom the Catholics do not experience even the return of common gratitude—a clergy who in times past opposed to the last the political freedom of the Irish people, and at

the present day are opposed to reform and a liberal scheme of education for their countrymen. That ministers of the God of charity should not, by misapplication of all the tithes to their own private uses, thus deprive the poor of their patrimony—nor should ministers of peace adhere with such desperate tenacity to a system fraught with dissension, hatred, and ill-will.' The grievance was real enough—obvious to all who were not blinded by a superstitious worship of man-made law, so as to be insensible to those ulterior laws which it is impious to disregard. There was indeed no time to lose; but, unhappily, there was no man in power free and bold enough broadly to assert the higher laws: and thus the lower was not withdrawn, but only feebly mended; so that the change was found ineffectual. The work had to be done over again; and the chief part of it—the reduction of the Protestant Church to the needs of the Protestant population—has to be done yet, while Ireland appears as far from being tranquillised as ever.

The act, which bears date June 1, 1832, authorises the lord-lieutenant of Ireland to advance £60,000 to the Irish clergy who could prove themselves unable to collect their tithes for the year 1831. Their claims for that year thus became a debt from the Irish people to the government, recoverable by the powers of government. The claim of the clergy to any former arrears was not to be prejudiced by this act, which was designed, for temporary relief, and to interpose the government between the irritated people and the clergy. The government was to levy the arrears. Many in the House asked at once whether the government would be able to levy the arrears—defeated as it had been in endeavouring to aid the clergy to do so. The bill was proffered under a pledge from government that a tithe commutation should be instituted, which alone could justify the temporary measure of an advance to the clergy. The act passed rapidly through both Houses, and became law on the 1st of June. It was July before the further and permanent measures of government regarding tithes were brought forward; and, as the minister declared, the session was too far advanced to admit of the passage of them all. They were three. The first rendered the exist

ing Tithe Composition Act permanent and compulsory, instead of voluntary, and for a term of twenty-one years. The second constituted the bishop and beneficed clergy of every diocese a corporation for the management of tithe business, whereby individual clergymen would be relieved from the difficulties and dissensions attendant on a prosecution of their own claims. The corporation would levy and distribute the tithe for the diocese. The third provided for the redemption of the tithe by all who might wish to buy up their freedom from the charge. Sixteen years' purchase was the amount proposed; and permission was to be given to possessors of mortgaged and entailed estates to mortgage them further, in the first case, to the extent necessary for this object—such mortgage to have precedence of all that existed before; and, in the other case, to sell as much of the entailed estates as should be necessary for the redemption of the tithe.

This last and most important of the three bills was left over to the next session. It was the wish of ministers to carry the other two; but they succeeded only with the first—the act by which the tithes composition in Ireland was made compulsory and permanent.

The Relief Act would not work. The clergy were as much hated as ever for giving in to the government an account of the arrears of 1831. A clergyman in Tipperary was shot dead on his own lawn. The son of another and his driver were left on the highway—the one dead, the other supposed to be so. The people would not permit the posting of notices of arrears; and in the affrays caused in this process, several lives were lost at different points; and this furnished occasion to O'Connell for cries for vengeance for the Irish blood that was shed—cries which told with prodigious effect. It had been clear to many from the first that this was a game at which government could not play. Defeat, and victory by force of soldiery, were equally fatal. The issue was defeat. Towards the end of the next session, the avowal of ministers in parliament was that out of a sum of £104,285 of arrears due for 1831, government had been able to levy only £12,000; and that amount 'had been collected with great difficulty, and some loss of life.' Government had decided to abandon all

processes under the existing law, and to seek reimbursement in some other form, after having paid to the clergy the arrears of 1832, and the amounts due in the present year; which, together with those of 1831, now reached the sum of about a million. This amount of a million was to be provided by an issue of exchequer bills. This sum supposed a deduction from the claims of the clergy, for the advantage of secure and immediate payment. The reimbursement was to be by means of a general land-tax for a term of years; exemption being granted to those who could prove that they had paid their tithes. These propositions were warmly debated. The Conservatives condemned all concession, and claimed for the Church and clergy the uttermost farthing of their dues. The Irish members condemned the levy of tithe in any form, declared that the government was now regarded as a great tithe-proctor, and hated accordingly; and foretold a repetition, with aggravation, of the outrages of preceding years, on every attempt to levy the land-tax. Many of the liberal party, who yet would not desert the government, complained of the issue of the million under the name of a loan, when everybody knew that it would not prove recoverable, and would be in fact a gift to the Irish Church which they had no inclination to make. The Conservatives yielded, from pity and respect for the suffering clergy; the Liberals from a dislike to embarrass the government; and the Irish members could make no head against so many adversaries. The bill for collecting the arrears of tithes therefore passed the Lords on the 28th of August 1833.

The next year, the subject had to be brought up again. There was infinite mischief in this annual debating on a topic so charged with irritation to all parties; and now, at this late day, came out some facts, which, if they had been understood earlier, as they ought to have been, would have convinced so large a majority of the insufferable irksomeness of the imposition of tithe in Ireland, as to have insured its being got rid of long ago. Mr. Littleton was now secretary for Ireland; and he made his disclosures, and rendered his account, on the 20th of February.

On the 4th of that month, the king's speech had

recommended a consideration of 'a final adjustment of tithes' in Ireland; and in his remarks on the motion for the address, the Duke of Wellington had said, that the Irish clergy were in precisely the same miserable situation at present that they had been in before the passage of measures for their relief; and he considered that 'that most deserving race of men' was in danger of utter destruction—a statement which was not contradicted by Lord Grey in his reply to the duke's speech. After two years of experiment and debate, the Irish secretary was now compelled to call the attention of parliament to a new measure; but it was to be four years yet before this single point was settled. At the outset of his speech, Mr. Littleton made an avowal which might prudently have been taken to heart before, so as to save years of 'chronic civil war,' much misery of mind, and the loss of many lives. Mr. Littleton begged the House 'to bear in mind, that the statute-book had been loaded with enactments by the legislatures of both countries, for the purpose of giving the proprietors of tithes effectual means to enforce the law. The whole of those enactments had proved ineffectual. Many of them of the most severe description, extending even to capital punishment, had proved utterly useless.' No one could wonder at this who heard the statement that followed of the vexatious incidence of the Irish tithe. Owing to the extreme subdivision of land, the amounts were small—sometimes literally beyond expression; and in such cases, the debtor was one who had no money, or ready means of payment, and to whom it was exasperating to be called on, from time to time, for a religious tax, so paltry, and yet so inconvenient and so hurting to his conscience. In a parish in Carlow, the sum owing by 222 defaulters was a farthing each. 'A return of the actual number of defaulters whose debts were under a farthing, and rise by farthings up to a shilling, would exhibit a very large proportion of the gross number. In some instances, the charge upon the land amounted to only seven parts of a farthing. When he informed the committee that many of the smaller sums were payable by three or four persons some idea might be formed of the difficulty of collecting tithes in Ireland. The highest

aggregate charge was against those who owed individually about 2*d.*; and he would then beg to remind the committee, that it was not so much the sum as the situation of the individual, that rendered these charges oppressive. Twopence to one might be as great an impost as £2 to another. There was another great severity connected with the question of tithes. They were not simple. One proprietor alone did not come to the poor man to demand his tithes; but many, whose interests were irreconcilable and adverse, fastened upon him. There were different kinds of tithes—the vicarial, rectorial, and impropriate—all often fastening on the same individual, who was bound to meet the separate demands of each tithe-owner. The opposition to tithes, then, though it might receive an impulse from agitation, was not to be wholly traced to that source. There was a deeper source in the severity of the impost itself.' This was all very true; the disaster was, that it had not been known sooner. Such had been the state of the case during preceding years of legislation; during years when the Irish were called purely ungrateful, because the Emancipation Act did not tranquillise them. A quieter procedure on their part would have been wiser and more virtuous; but there was also little wisdom in the expectation that quietness would rise up and spread among an excitable and long-injured people, while a grievance like this was ignored by a government which called itself liberal, and friendly to Ireland. Now that the ministers had at last discovered that they had grievance, as well as agitation, to deal with, the method in which they proposed to deal with it was this—that all compositions for tithes should cease from the 1st of next November; and that the amount should be paid in the form of an annual land-tax to the king, who should cause provision to be made out of it, in land or money, for the clergy and other tithe-owners. This land-tax was to be redeemable. Mr. O'Connell, and other members from Ireland, vehemently opposed this proposal, reasonably alleging that it would merely establish the same impost under another name. They did not succeed now in delaying the introduction of the bill; but on the 30th of July when it was in committee, Mr. O'Connell had his revenge

for the moment. He objected to the proposal that government should recover the amount of the tithes; said that they would never succeed in taming the Irish people by pretending to throw salt on the tails of the landlords; and moved that the tithes should be made payable immediately from the landlords to the clergy, after being reduced. 40 per cent. This motion was in the form of an amendment to the third clause of the bill; and it was carried by a very large majority—the numbers being 82 to 33.

After taking time to consider, the ministers determined to go on with the bill. They never would have proposed a large reduction in the incomes of the Irish clergy; but as the House of Commons had declared itself broadly in favour of such a reduction, and it would facilitate the settling of the system, they could have no objection. And they believed that the clergy—to whom individually the reduction would be only 22½ per cent.—would be willing and thankful to receive that amount, in consideration of the security, punctuality, and peaceableness which would now attend the payments. The lord chancellor put it to the Peers, when the bill came before them, whether any one of them deriving a nominal income of £100,000 from his estates, would not be very glad to receive in gold, on a certain day, without a chance of disappointment, £77,500, with a release from all disputes, pains, and penalties, from bad or impoverished tenants.* If their own bishops were to be believed, however, the great majority of the Irish clergy were hostile to the measure. In that case—if they were still able and disposed to stand out, under the risk of Irish outrage, for the full hire of their spiritual service—the compassion of parliament was thrown away upon them, and that of the nation must be reserved for the suffering minority of the clergy, who were ready to sacrifice something for peace, and to avoid causing their brother to offend. But even these more high-minded sufferers were not to be aided yet. On the motion for the second reading in the Lords, Lord Ellenborough moved that the bill should be read that day six months, and threw it out by a majority of 67 out of 311 votes, by proxy or present. The Bishops who were in favour of the measure were those of Derry, Chichester, and Norwich. On the other side were

the Archbishops of Canterbury and Cashel, and nineteen bishops. The division showed that the spiritual peers were quite of Lord Melbourne's opinion—which was earnestly expressed—as to the unspeakable importance of the measure; only they took an opposite view of it. It was but for a short time, for within five years they had to yield; and meanwhile, their conduct, whether attributed to pride, to greed, to enmity to the Catholic Irish, or merely to such narrowness of view as ill becomes legislators, went as far to impair the dignity and influence of the Church among those who watched the case, as their success in throwing out the Reform Bill three years before.

Thus ended in failure the endeavour of the Whig administration to deal with the Irish tithe question: a difficulty so radical as to require radical treatment, as has been since practically acknowledged. The effect of merely tampering with it was very disastrous: the government was foiled; the clergy sank into a deeper slough of popular hatred; and the Irish Church lost every year more of its dignity in the eyes of its own well-wishers.

The great question of its preservation in any form had now for some time been discussed; and so discussed that it was necessary for the administration of the time—whatever it might be—to take up the argument. Everybody knew that the chief incitement to the repeal agitation was the hope of getting rid of the Church. The Tories were disposed to defy the repeal cry, and all agitation, and to uphold the dues of the Church, even to the last penny of church-cess, and the smallest fraction of a farthing of tithe. A large number of the Liberal party were for so abating the Irish Church as to throw its maintenance upon its own members, and reduce its ministers to some proportion to their flocks. The endeavour of the administration was to keep a middle course between these extreme parties. In 1833, the government proposed to empower a board of ecclesiastical commissioners, by act of parliament, to make extensive changes in the Irish Church, which, it was hoped, would be so manifestly for the advantage of all parties as to secure a sufficient support in parliament.

It appears, by a census purposely taken in 1834, that the proportion of the numbers of the Protestant Church

in Ireland to that of Catholics and Dissenters was this: The Catholics were 6,436,060; the members of the Established Church were 853,160; and the Dissenters, 665,540 —that is, while the Catholics were above 80 per cent., the Church Protestants were just above 10, and the Dissenters 8, per cent. The revenues of this Church were £865,525 —above £1 per head of its members! There were nearly 1400 benefices—of which forty-one did not contain a single Protestant; twenty had under five, and 165 contained under five-and-twenty. In 157 benefices, no service was performed, the incumbent being an absentee. There were four archbishops and eighteen bishops for this little flock. It was impossible that such a Church could long be endured in a country so peopled; and the reductions now proposed by government were very considerable.

Two archbishops and ten bishops were to be the last of their name. Their dioceses were to be united with others as opportunity arose; and on the death of the primate, the income of his see was to be reduced from £14,500 to £10,000. Deans and chapters were no longer to enjoy dignity without work. They were to be abolished, or to undertake the cure of souls. Sinecure benefices were to be endured no longer; the commissioners might suspend the appointment of ministers who had not done duty for three years before. The first-fruits, which were a trouble and grievance producing little return, were to be abolished, and replaced by a tax on benefices and episcopal incomes, rising in its percentage from the smallest benefice not under £200 a year, to the vast incomes of some of the bishops; the humble livings paying 5 per cent., and any episcopal income exceeding £1,500 a year, 15 per cent. It was expected that by the sum thus raised—about £69,000 a year—a sufficient provision would be secured for the repair of churches and conducting of the service, so that the odious impost of church-cess might be abolished, its amount being estimated at £70,000 a year. The one remaining point was that which occasioned the fiercest disputes; disputes which lasted for a course of years, and are certainly destined to be renewed hereafter. In opening the scheme of government for altering—to the advantage of all other parties without injury to the clergy—the terms for letting the lands of the

Church, Lord Althorp did not conceal his opinion that any additional funds accruing from such change of management were fairly to be considered state funds, applicable to general state purposes. Supposing the Church left where she was before—deprived of nothing present or future—the profits of any improvement suggested and achieved by the government might be claimed by the government for the good of the state. The amount anticipated from this source was about, or nearly, three millions.

The government were anxious to lose no time, 'under existing circumstances,' in carrying this bill. It was brought in on the 11th of March. There was debate about the time of the second reading, and one of those mistakes to which the present ministry seemed to be doomed; so that a delay of many weeks ensued. This was a tax-bill, and it was necessary to introduce it in a committee of the whole House; and thus, as the point had to be argued, the ministers to be convicted of error, and the whole matter gone over again, it was the 6th of May before it reached the second reading. It was then very nearly dismissed a second time, on account of an oversight of ministers in reciting a message from the king which had never been delivered to parliament; but the speaker decided that the objectors should have brought forward their point before the first reading, and must now wait till the bill was in committee, by which time the necessary message from the king might be received. The majority on this occasion was large in favour of the measure—many members, however, giving notice that they should ultimately oppose it, unless it was decided in committee that all accruing funds whatsoever should be devoted to ecclesiastical purposes. It was in vain that government explained that the fund from new church leases should be applied to educational and other objects which ought to be those of the Church. That provision was expunged from the bill in committee. It was also decreed that the tax on clerical incomes should date only from the death of the present incumbents. With these alterations, the bill passed the Lower House, on the 8th of July 1833, by a majority of 274 to 94; a proportion which shows how much stronger was the apprehension of danger from Ireland, than the cry,

loud as it was, about confiscation of the property of the Church.

The Peers were believed to intend to make a vigorous rally against this very important bill, with whose passage the existence of the ministry was understood to be bound up. On a recent occasion, when the Reform Bill had been in danger, a well-timed vote of the Commons of confidence in ministers had been found of service; and it was now proposed again to intimate to the Peers that the Commons had a very decided will in regard to the reformation of the Irish Church. Sir J. Wrottesley, after due notice, and in opposition to the entreaties of ministers, moved for a call of the House on the 17th of July—the day of the second reading in the Lords; and he was nearly successful—125 voting with him, and 160 against him.

The opposition in the Lords was strong, but not effectual. The support given to the measure was somewhat grudging; but it was sufficient—no doubt for the reason assigned, in a few remarkable words, by the Earl of Wicklow for his share in carrying the bill through. 'He could not be taken to be a supporter of ministers because he meant to vote for their present measure. He conceived that every act of theirs bore upon it the stamp of revolution—the present no less than others; but he would for that very reason vote for the present bill, because, if he did not, he might on a future occasion—like him with the books of the Sibyl—have to pay a higher price for less value.' The Duke of Wellington who had more reason than most men to know what to dread from Irish discontent, supported the bill, on condition of certain amendments; and all went well, except that ministers were outvoted on the point of the disposal of the revenues of suspended appointments. By a majority of two it was decided that such revenues should be applied to the repairs of the church and glebe-house; and then, any surplus should go into the hands of the commissioners. After consideration, Lord Grey and his colleagues determined not to throw up the bill for the sake of this one point. It passed, on the 30th of July, by a majority of 54, out of 216 votes, and in the midst of a vigorous recording of protests by alarmed peers. Of these protests, the most remarkable one

is that of the Duke of Cumberland, who reverts to the old ground—by that time forgotten by every one else—of the coronation oath, of which he declares this measure a clear violation. The commissioners appointed under the bill were the Primate of Ireland and Archbishop of Dublin, the lord chancellor and chief-justice of Ireland, and four of the Irish bishops. Their powers were great; and it was confidently hoped that they would be put to vigorous use. But no one supposed that anything that they could do would finally settle the difficulty of the Irish Church; and it would be so long before the relief of their measures could be practically felt, that much might happen meantime.

Though the state of Ireland was less disturbed, in the course of a few months, the agitation for repeal went on so vigorously that the royal speech made express reference to it at the opening of the session of 1834, and both Houses of parliament replied in a special address; it being well understood by all parties that the Church grievance supplied the whole body and spirit of the agitation. Men who agreed that the fact was so, were far from agreeing as to what should be done; and none differed more irreconcilably than the members of the cabinet, as events presently showed.

In the preceding year Mr. Stanley had ceased to be Irish secretary, having entered the cabinet as colonial secretary, when Lord Goderich became Earl of Ripon, with the office of lord privy seal. It was at that time that Mr. Littleton (since Lord Hatherton) became Irish secretary, and entered upon the warfare which his office imposed upon any one compelled daily to hold a sort of conservative ground against Mr. O'Connell and his friends in the House. Towards Mr. Stanley the Irish members had been to the last degree fierce; and he was not of a temper to keep the peace under provocation, or so made as to conceal the disgust and contempt from which he has ever appeared to suffer, as from a chronic malady, all the days of his life. What the colonies might have to say to the change would be known in due course; meantime, it was a comfort to the ministers to see a good-tempered man, who seemed to be liked by the Irish members, in the place of one who was so vehemently hated by them. The difference of opinion in

the cabinet about the power of the state over any new revenues of the Irish Church, was of less consequence, as the chief of the minority—who called such a doctrine a plan of confiscation—was now occupied with colonial affairs. The difference might for some time longer have caused nothing more serious than preparatory discussion, but for the subject of the Irish Church being brought up by Mr. Ward, member for St. Albans, on the 27th of May, in a motion for the reduction of its establishment, as it exceeded the spiritual wants of the Protestant population, and as it is the right of the state to regulate the distribution of church-property, in such manner as parliament may determine. The motion was seconded by Mr. Grote, one of the members for London, who had scarcely begun to address the House when Lord Althorp received some information which induced him, at the close of Mr. Grote's speech, to request the House to adjourn the debate from the present Tuesday to the Monday following. On this question—of the right of the state over any proceeds of church-property—the administration could not bear a touch. The news which had reached Lord Althorp was that the leaders of the minority in the cabinet—Mr. Stanley and Sir James Graham—had resigned. They had hurried on their court-dresses, and gone to the king, to surrender office. Their example was immediately followed by Lord Ripon and the Duke of Richmond. The single Tory, and two 'Canningites,' were now gone; and the ministry, being wholly Liberal—or supposed to be so—could henceforth work more freely. Such was the speculation in the House of Commons, in Lombard Street, and in Ireland. Lord Auckland went to the Admiralty; Mr. Spring Rice to the Colonial Office; and the privy seal was held by Lord Carlisle. Mr. Poulett Thomson at the same time became president, instead of vice-president, of the Board of Trade; and the Marquis of Conyngham succeeded the Duke of Richmond at the Post-office.

The opponents of a liberal policy knew what was the weakest point of the administration—of this administration, as of several that had preceded; the timidity and deficient ability of the king. They lost no time in attacking this weak point. The day after the debate had been

so strangely interrupted was the king's birthday festival; and the Irish bishops went up to the throne with an address, signed most numerously by Irish prelates and clergy, deprecating changes in the establishment. Whether the King's mind was overfull of the subject before, so as to flow out at the first touch of his feelings, or whether any circumstance at the moment tempted him away from the ordinary practice in replying to such addresses, there is no saying; but he poured out a set of sentiments, ideas, and promises, which placed himself and his government in a position of great embarrassment, and grievously aggravated the prevalent excitement. This extraordinary speech began with the words: 'I now remember you have a right to require of me to be resolute in defence of the Church.' The king went on to assure the eagerly listening clergy that the Church of England and Ireland should be preserved unimpaired by him; and that, if any of the inferior arrangements in the discipline of the Irish Church required amendment—'which, however, he greatly doubted —he hoped it would be left to the bishops to correct them, without interference on any hand. He was completing his sixty-ninth year, and must prepare to leave the world with a conscience clear in regard to the maintenance of the Church.' 'I have spoken more strongly than usual,' he said in conclusion, with tears running down his cheeks, 'because of unhappy circumstances that have forced themselves upon the observation of all. The threats of those who are enemies of the Church make it the more necessary for those who feel their duty to that Church to speak out. The words which you hear from me are, indeed, spoken by my mouth, but they flow from my heart.' He had, somewhat unnecessarily, assured his hearers that his speech was not a prepared one, got by heart, but uttered from the feeling of the moment. As such an indiscretion must be infinitely embarrassing to his ministers, the utmost pains were taken to scatter this speech through the country without the delay of an hour, that the House of Commons and the ministers might be overawed before the renewal of the debate on Mr. Ward's motion, the next Monday.

Meantime, the ministers did not resign. They had had experience before of the weakness of the king, and did not

think it right to give up the country to be governed by the leaders of the minority, under a sovereign who could not help agreeing with the last speaker, and who was always impetuous on behalf of his latest impression. The ministers did not resign; but the general conviction of their insecurity in office was so strong that Mr. Ward declined to withdraw his motion, saying that the assertion of its principle was made doubly important by the probability that men would presently be in power who would need such a check from the legislature. During the week, it had become known that Lord Grey had declared that he had neither nerve nor spirits for the vigorous reconstruction of the cabinet; and that his predominant wish—to have Lord Durham there—had been overborne by the lord chancellor and Lord Lansdowne. Two addresses to the premier had been presented on the part of members of the House of Commons: the one, a declaration of confidence in Lord Grey; the other, prepared after the intrigues in the cabinet had become known, expressive of dissatisfaction at the discountenance of popular principles in the new appointments. The ministerial papers themselves openly warned the nation that the government was only 'patched up,' to get through the session; and that, before the year was out, unless the matter were looked to in time, the nation would be at the mercy of the court, which was itself in the hands of the Church.

Under such circumstances, Mr. Ward refused to withdraw his motion. He was probably aware that Mr. Hume was about to quote a letter from Lord Anglesea to the premier, in which he insisted on a large reform of the Church as absolutely essential to the peace of Ireland; and he could quote as a sanction to his motion the words of Lord Althorp himself, a few months before: 'If, by any act of the legislature, new value can be given to any property belonging to the Church, that new value will not properly belong to the Church, because it is an acquisition dependent on such act of the legislature, and may be appropriated immediately to the use of the state.' Mr. Ward's anxiety was to reassert this principle; and pitiable was the position of Lord Althorp, if he was really about to evade that declaration of his own. His position was

pitiable. He was wont to say, with his good-humoured smile, that it was hard upon him to force him to be a statesman, when nature had made him a grazier; and the lot was doubly hard which threw him into a cabinet where there was no power of will, no enlightened union, no combined working faculty, to sustain the efficiency and dignity of the government when the *appui* of popular will and popular dictation was withdrawn. Lord Grey was aged, worn, and weary; Lord Lansdowne was for taking a middle course, and evading difficulties, on all occasions whatever. Mr. Stanley had aggravated all existing difficulties, and created many new ones, by his porcupine demeanour; and the whole administration was kept in perpetual hot water by the intrigues and indiscretions of the lord chancellor. Thus disunited among themselves, struggling in a slough of difficulties, where no one could help another, and the people withdrawing from them further and further every day, they contradicted themselves and each other, gave pledges and forgot or dropped them, strove in the first place always to evade difficulties which they had not faculty or influence to overcome, had long lost their popularity, and stood a spectacle of weakness to the weak sovereign himself. Thus, Lord Althorp's position on the evening of the 2nd of June was truly a pitiable one.

By prodigious exertion, a plan for a commission of inquiry respecting the Irish Church had been framed, and commissioners found, by the Monday morning. In the afternoon, a council of the supporters of the cabinet was held in Downing Street, at which the procedure of the evening was determined on. Mr. Ward was to be outvoted at any risk, as his success would bring on a decision of the perilous question about church-property, cause the dissolution of the ministry, and, no doubt, a general election, in which the Church and State question would be the watch-word. The supporters of the ministry knew that their constituents were in a mood which it would not be pleasant to encounter; and they were thankful to learn that government had provided a means of escape from either affirming or denying Mr. Ward's principle.

When they went to the House, they found it surrounded by a crowd, and so filled that it was difficult for them to

make their way to their seats. Mr Ward's speech was brief, courteous, but firm. Lord Althorp then announced the intention of the government to issue a special commission of inquiry, composed of laymen, which should visit every parish in Ireland, and report its population, under the heads of the three religions, its spiritual provisions, and its ecclesiastical revenues. The Church party regarded the measure as merely a preparation for 'confiscation;' and the Liberals saw no occasion for further evidence on a point of fact which was undisputed, while the principle which was the point of dispute was passed over in silence, and nothing gained by this device but more time for the government to shuffle on. Lord Althorp declared that the commission was in fact already issued; that he saw no necessity for parliament to pronounce on the principle of Mr. Ward's motion, and that he should move the previous question. This he did, and obtained an overwhelming majority—of 276 in a House of 516.

In the other House, the premier had to run the gauntlet between the lines of objectors to the new commission; and there really was no good answer to give to the complaint that the ecclesiastical commission of the preceding year had been agreed to on the supposition of its being a final measure, and that no one had dreamed of its being overridden by another commission, before it had had time to show how it would do its work. The true answer to this would have been, that the ministers were as far from dreaming of such a thing as anybody else, till recent perplexities had put it into their heads. From this moment, the ministers were incessantly called on for explanations of their views on this great subject of the appropriation of church revenues by the state; and on different occasions they expressed themselves with varying degrees of explicitness. On the 23rd of June, Mr. O'Connell moved an instruction to the committee on the Tithe Bill, that whatever surplus remained, after the wants of the Protestant Church were duly provided for, should be applied to purposes of general utility —which he explained to mean, not the making of roads and bridges, but purposes of charity and of education, in whose benefits the needy of all faiths should share alike. On this occasion, Lord John Russell and Lord Althorp

declared their agreement with Mr. O'Connell, if the ground were taken that these purposes were of a religious character, leaving open the question whether such funds could be applied—by not only legal right, for that was clear, but by moral and equitable right—to secular purposes. The question was thus transferred to a new ground—the shaking bog of metaphysics, on which it would be for ever impossible for any legislature to decide and act. It is no subject for legislation whether charity and education are religious or secular works; nor can it be settled whether parliament, having a clear legal right to dispose of any funds, must have a proved moral and equitable right also; nor how a moral and equitable right is provable, or even assignable, otherwise than by affirming or repealing the legal right. The only thing clear was that nothing could be actually done in the matter, for the relief of the Irish Catholics, and the satisfaction of the discontented throughout the kingdom, while the war was one of metaphysical distinctions.

The whole bearing and importance of this question in 1834 can hardly be understood without taking a view of the condition of religion and the Church in England at that date. This will presently come before us, when we shall have to show what were the views and aims of the Whig administration in this direction. The story of what they achieved during their present term of office is nearly concluded; and we see them now in a position of perplexity and weakness which it is clear they could not long maintain. They must obtain more strength or sink.

In the preceding year, a bill had been passed which conferred extraordinary powers on the lord-lieutenant of Ireland, for putting down the fearful disturbances of that country. Among the provisions of that bill were two of eminent importance; that of suspending the ordinary course of justice in favour of martial law, and of prohibiting political meetings and discussions. The bill was reported by the Irish authorities to have worked well; and to the premier's mind it was clear that it ought to be renewed on its expiration in August 1834, with the omission only of the portion relating to martial law. To others, however, the expediency was not so clear; and it appears that the same want of confidence between the members of the

government, or other causes of disunion, existed in regard to this as to other measures; for it is scarcely possible to doubt, among much conflicting evidence, that up to a certain day, it was not the intention of government to renew the Coercion Bill entire, except as to martial law, but to leave out that portion relating to public meetings, which most exasperated the wrath of Mr. O'Connell. Mr. Littleton, the Irish secretary, certainly relied upon this; and he sent for Mr. O'Connell to assure him of this agreeable prospect, hoping, as Mr. Littleton himself avowed, to deter O'Connell from agitating on occasion of the pending Wexford election. The communication was made under the seal of secrecy. It is hard to know whether to wonder most at the simplicity which supposed that O'Connell was to be trusted with a political secret, or at the folly of imagining that political secrets of such weight can be kept, except among confederates. Mr. O'Connell explained how he conceived himself relieved from obligation to secrecy, and revealed the awkward fact that Mr. Littleton had told him that the Irish government was opposed to the renewal of the Coercion Bill. The agitator had immediately caused the repeal candidate for Wexford to retire; and, when it was too late, he received a message from Mr. Littleton, that the government intended to enforce the whole Coercion Bill, except the part relating to martial law. He was naturally indignant, declared himself tricked out of the Wexford election, called upon the Irish secretary to retire, and told the whole story in the House—inciting his opponent to deliver his version first. On inquiry in the other House, the premier and the lord chancellor declared, the next evening, that they knew nothing of any negotiations between the Irish secretary and Mr. O'Connell, and that they did not believe that any such had taken place. Great must have been their astonishment when they read the secretary's own statement of the transaction, which was not so materially different from Mr. O'Connell's as to exempt him from the charge of 'gross indiscretion.' His plea for the change of the policy of the cabinet was that new circumstances became known to government, which justified a renewal of the provisions against political meetings; but, as he did not explain what those circumstances were,

the plea did not improve his case. The general impression was, that he had been sincere, but most unwise; that he ought to have resigned office, on such a conviction of indiscretion; and that the affairs of the nation could no longer be safely confided to an administration so ill combined, and whose proceedings were so desultory and immature.

To the premier, the affair must have been deeply wounding; and it proved to be fatal to his political life. He was aware, as we know by Lord Althorp's explanations, that a valuable minority in his cabinet were of the same opinion with the lord-lieutenant—namely, that the clauses against public meetings in Ireland need not be re-enacted; and that this minority had yielded the point only to avoid breaking up the cabinet; and now that Mr. O'Connell had been admitted by the Irish secretary to a peep at this state of things—he, of all men!—what remained of dignity or efficiency to his government? When he moved the second reading of the Coercion Bill on the 4th of July, he spoke low and hurriedly. His son-in-law, Lord Durham, opposed the re-enactment of the clauses against political meetings, in words as few and moderate as his honest convictions permitted; and his opposition was received with a good grace by the minister; but it was one of the incidents which wrought against the tottering government.

This was on Friday night. On Saturday, Mr. Littleton tendered his resignation. It was not accepted—indignant as Lord Grey had declared himself about the transaction with Mr. O'Connell. It was supposed that there was little hope of filling up the vacancy, in a perilous crisis, with an able man who was sure of a seat in the House—so deep was now the unpopularity of the Whig ministry. But on Monday Lord Althorp resigned, and would not be persuaded to remain in office. High as his character stood for honesty and courage, he was aware that it would not sustain him under the odium of carrying through the Commons such a Coercion Bill as he was now universally known to have condemned in council. He persisted in retiring; and then Lord Grey saw no other course than resigning too. By Lord Althorp's retirement, he lost his best colleague; the Coercion Bill would have no authority now, if even he could pass it; and if he relinquished it,

his belief was well known to be that Ireland could not be governed without it. On Tuesday he presented his resignation to the king.

On Wednesday evening, the last act was to be done. The old statesman, now in his seventy-first year, had to take leave of power. He was worn and weakened by the toils and responsibilities of office, and he was conscious of having fallen somewhat behind the time—earnest as he was in saying that the times went too fast, and not he too slow. The close of his term of power was mortifying, if not ignoble, in its character—affording but too much incitement to the taunts and vindictiveness of adversaries—taunts and triumphs which were not spared even on this occasion. Twice he rose and murmured a few words, stopped, and sank down upon his seat. The House cheered him, but he seemed unable to rise. The Duke of Wellington occupied a few minutes in presenting petitions, in order to give Lord Grey time to recover himself. When the old man rose a third time, he spoke feebly and tremulously; but he gathered strength as he proceeded, and so spoke as to interest all feelings, of friend or foe, except where, as in the cases of the Duke of Wellington and the lord chancellor, an overpowering fear for the Church and other institutions, and personal regards, hardened the heart and closed the mind against reverent emotions and clear convictions, which were shared by all others who had the privilege to hear. The duke naturally fired up at the implied charge of vacillation against his brother, the lord-lieutenant of Ireland, in regard to the Coercion Bill; and it was natural that, with a brotherly feeling for Lord Wellesley's responsibilities, he should vehemently assert that Lord Grey's resignation, being unnecessary, was a desertion of his sovereign; but the rest of the speech, in which he reviewed the measures of Lord Grey's government, was nothing short of malignant. One circumstance which could not be overlooked at the time, and cannot pass unnoticed by the reader of our day, is its perfect likeness, in conception and spirit, to Lord Grey's speech against Canning, which fixed the deepest arrow of the flight under which he sank. Lord Grey was less unhappy than Canning in being present to hear what was said of him, instead of

learning it from others and being unable to reply; and again, the duke had not power so to express himself as to wound so deeply as Lord Grey; and thus the retribution was not severe, but it must have sorely embittered the parting moment. It is bitter even to the impartial reader to witness these displays of infirmity—of that deep-seated infirmity which weakens the moral force of three such men as these—rendering them unable, not only to appreciate each other's course, but to wait with patience to see the results—asking Time to be the arbiter, who will be the arbiter in spite of them. The lord chancellor's speech drew off the hearers from the painful feelings excited by the duke, or gave others in their place. There was abundant laudation of Lord Grey—such as it required courage to offer, face to face, to such a man; but with it a clear rebuke to him for resigning; and upon this followed a sentence or two which, grave as was the occasion, caused shouts of laughter—there being few present who did not know something of the state of the king's mind towards the ministers, who were so formidably reforming the Church against his will. The lord chancellor 'felt that he should not discharge his duty if, at all sacrifice of his comfort—at all abandonment of his own ease—at the destruction, if so it might be, of his own peace of mind, he did not stand by that gracious monarch and that country whose support—whose cordial and hearty support—he had received during the three years and a half of which he had been a member of the government. After having said this, he need not add that he had not tendered his resignation.' When the laughter permitted him to be again heard, he asked: 'Did their lordships think that there was anything very peculiarly merry or amusing in being minister at the present time?' No: in the contempt into which this administration had long been falling, there was nothing that was not painful to all sound-hearted men, of every party.

Lord Grey, in his speech, requested a fair judgment from those who thought he had committed errors, and did not anticipate any charge of indifference to principle or deviation from honour. He might well feel this security. Brighter honour never shone through any statesman's life: a nobler consistency never crowned a statesman's career.

On this not a syllable need be said; for with him, throughout his life, the word answered to the thought; and he possessed the deep secret of high honour, in other people's feelings being to him as his own. His honour was not of the nice and sensitive character which springs from egotism, and has therefore a dash of cowardice in it: it was of the brave and healthy sort which needs no special care, but flourishes best by thinking seldom of itself. The only approach to a doubt on this part of Lord Grey's character was caused by his profuse distribution of office among his relations; and he thought, with great simplicity, that he had disposed of this complaint in his speech of this night, by asking whether these many relations did not do their work well, and declaring that the family connection generally had grown, not richer, but poorer, since they came into office. Could such a man overlook the truth that it is unfair to exclude others from office by filling departments with members of one family, and detrimental to the interests of the state to have in its departments an overruling cast of ideas and feelings? Did he not know how strong was the national response to Canning when he complained of the monopoly of government by 'a few great families?' And could such a man suppose that the complainants were thinking only of the salaries that his relations engrossed, and not of the honours, powers, occupations, and dignities of office? This was one of the 'errors' with which he anticipated that he might be charged. And it is difficult to charge him with any other; for the rest was not error but incapacity; an induced incapacity, with which he was afflicted—and the nation through him—through the evil operation of aristocratic station, uncorrected by timely political labour, and the extensive intercourses which are a privilege attendant upon it. He knew no more of the British people than he did of the Spaniards or the Germans. He did not see the scope of his own Reform Bill, and could not bear the consequences of his own greatest act—the fruition of the aim of his whole life. When he had himself taken up the House of Lords in his hand, broken its fastenings, and set it down in a lower place, he insisted that it was still where it was before; and he 'would stand by his order'

against any who declared to the contrary. He governed with a feeble and uncertain hand, because he could not freely throw his mind into the common stock with his colleagues, or induce them to do the same. He respected them—valued them—graced them—but could not make common cause with them. And he fell by insisting on coercing speech in Ireland, when the ruler of Ireland offered to govern that country without a power so stringent, and his own 'best arm' in the cabinet, and some other valuable members, were opposed to the act of despotism. It was needless to protest that he acted from his conscience. Nobody doubted his doing so, in all his political acts. The question was whether his conscience was illumined by the best lights of intelligence. When the grand inquisitor declared that he acted from conscientious love of his victims; when Francis of Austria and Metternich declared that the Spielberg prisoners were tortured, body and mind, for the sake of the nation; when the Duke of York pleaded conscience for his intended rigour towards the Catholics—nobody doubted the sincerity of the men. The question was whether their consciences could be permitted to overrule those of a multitude of other men. And so, in a much milder way, was it now in the case of Lord Grey. The question was, whether speech was to be coerced in Ireland because Lord Grey conscientiously believed it ought. Mr. Littleton expressed in the Commons, on this same night, a remorse which it was painful to witness for the act by which he had compelled the decision. It was natural that he should do so, but there were few or none who thought, in a little while, that the event was to be lamented. It was not only that the cabinet could not have stood for any length of time; it was that the manner of Lord Grey's fall, however mortifying to his friends and his party, and pathetic in all eyes, was instructive, alike as a comment on the past and a warning for the future. And for himself—his lot was not hard, though less brilliant than it had been. He was nowhere blamed for any fault but that which perhaps he had no great objection to be charged with—an excess of the aristocratic spirit. He retired, amidst universal, if not unmingled sympathy and respect, to enjoy the repose which his years required, in

the bosom of a family by whom he was adored. He had had the last experience of civic glory; and he was now to find how much more he enjoyed the serene household glories of a home like his.

CHAPTER X.

Religious Crisis—The Tractarians—The Evangelical Party—Death of Wilberforce—Of Hannah More—Moderate Church Party—Opening of Universities to Dissenters—The Church in Danger—Church Reform—Lord Henley—Dr. Arnold—The Dissenters—Government Circular—Perplexities of Ministers—Admission of Quakers to Parliament—Continued Exclusion of Jews—Deaths of Robert Hall—Rowland Hill—Charles Wesley—Adam Clarke—Rammohun Roy—Dr. Doyle—Schism in the Scotch Church—Irving, St. Simonism—Proposed Ecclesiastical Commission.

The period under review, memorable on many accounts, is for nothing more so than for the perturbations of its religious life. How long the crisis might have been deferred, and what would have been its issue, if the war had been protracted, it is impossible to divine. It was after seventeen years of peace, and with the reforms of a peace-period for its proximate cause, that it actually occurred; and sooner or later it must have occurred, under any conditions of the secular life of the nation. As it was, the perturbation was so extraordinary, and to those who were timid by constitution or by creed so fearful, that it seemed as if the fountains of the deeps of men's minds were broken up. Amidst the deluge of conflicting theologies and wills, the administration and parliament drifted helplessly and blindly; and it was clear that no good steering was to be expected from them, nor any discovery of dry land where the struggling minds of men might find a footing and rest. Such crises are, as the clear-sighted of all parties admit, an inevitable consequence of a union of Church and State. The firmest friends of that union admit this without hesitation, while declaring the advantages of such an arrangement to preponderate

over the occasional inconvenience and risk. As time passes on, and those changes are wrought which never cease, the terms of the union must be remodelled, and newly risen questions must be settled, while it is quite certain that the ministers of the state will not be able fully to enter into the views of those of the Church; and the ministers of the Church must inevitably despise and be shocked at the statesman's views of religious claims and affairs.

When the critical period of indispensable change arrives, all difficulties are aggravated—in the instance of England and her Establishment—by the perpetual existence of three parties within that Church, whose views and habit of mind differ too widely to admit of a peaceable co-existence for any length of time in a Protestant Establishment; though the Romish Church is able, in such a case, to include and occupy them all, without controversy and confusion. This weighty fact has been adverted to before, in connection with the first manifestation of the great disturbance which was now to reach its height for the time—that is, when the controversy on the Peterborough questions took place in 1821. That first instance of revived High-Church domination over faith took the nation by surprise; the oppressed clergy petitioned parliament for relief and justice; almost every voice that was raised at all was raised against the claim of the bishop; and there was one circumstance in the case that was never forgotten, and will never be forgotten—that no bishop but the one appealed against opened his lips upon the subject, though every endeavour was used in the House of Lords to make the prelates speak. Clear as it was to all that they were in parliament for the very purpose of guiding the state in such affairs as this, their constrained and ignoble silence showed that they were unprepared for the great controversy, just then opening, between the claims of the Church and the Protestant doctrine of liberty of opinion.

Twelve years elapsed between that discussion in parliament and the reduction of the Irish Church by the administration of Lord Grey. In the interval, rumours had spread of the rise of a sect within the Church, whose head-quarters were at Oxford; as there had been rumours

before of the rise of a Church sect at Cambridge. That at Cambridge had originated the movement called Evangelical, intended to revive the life of religion in the Church, and promoted by the earnest zeal and munificence of its members in filling the pulpits of the Establishment with devout Calvinistic ministers, who caused a powerful religious revival among the aristocratic and wealthy classes of society. The Oxford movement was of a widely different character, representing as it did the opposite party in the Church from that of the Simeons, Wilberforces, and Thorntons. The rumours which stole abroad told of observances which excited no little surprise, while some who heard were amused, and others seriously grieved and alarmed. It was scarcely conceivable that Laud and his ways should have risen up again among us in the nineteenth century; yet those who had seen and heard what went on within the University of Oxford told of priestly claims, and obedience of novices; of homage to the memory of Charles the Martyr; of devout reception and study of ancient tradition and the Christian fathers, and a passionate disparagement of the Reformation and Protestantism; of exclusive reliance on the sacraments of the Church; of the most frequent possible celebration of its services; of the setting up of oratories and of crosses; of scrupulosity about garments and postures and fasts; and even of auricular confession. Where so much was said, something must be true; and it was not long before the Oxford men published to the world ample evidence that some strange things indeed were true.

On occasion of the reduction of the Irish Church, the Oxford party believed the time to be come for them to preach their principles, and save, if it yet might be, the Church and the nation. They denied the rightful power of the government to touch the constitution and revenues of the Church; and they apprehended that parliament would gratify the earnest desire of a large body of Churchmen, in reforming the Book of Common Prayer, through a commission of state appointment. To avert such a desecration, and all further spoliation of the Church, and to obtain perhaps a restitution of what had been taken from her, the Oxford sect resolved to work upon the public

mind in all directions—through the press, as well as by means of the pulpit and private exhortation, and vigorous proselyting among the young. According to their own authorised statement, delivered by Mr. Perceval in a letter to the editor of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Journal*, their first business was to enforce their tenets through a set of tracts, which gave to the sect, for some years, the name of Tractarians. The leading doctrine of these tracts is that of apostolical succession. The only way of salvation is declared to be through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and the only way in which that sacrament can be administered is by the hands of the successors of the apostles, with whom is deposited this sole power of communicating the means of salvation. The necessity of Episcopacy is thus declared, and not merely its expediency; and from this follows a train of doctrines which do not need more than a slight indication. As the Scriptures do not contain any account of the institution of Episcopacy by Christ, some other and co-equal authority must be adduced; and tradition is that co-ordinate authority. Hence follows the exclusive reverence for the Christian fathers, as the historians and registrars of tradition. Hence, too, the reverence for many of the forms and observances of Romanism which, being traced to an Episcopal foundation, cannot be refused. Hence, too, the indignation and horror at the interference of government with church funds and offices; and an expressed willingness that the Church should, as soon as possible, be separated from the state. Of these tracts, Dr. Arnold wrote in April 1834: 'They are strenuously puffed by the *British Magazine*, and strenuously circulated among the clergy; of course, I do not suppose that any living man out of the clergy is in the slightest danger of being influenced by them, except so far as they may lead him to despise the clergy for countenancing them.' The fact did not answer to this anticipation. If the Tractarian clergy might soon be counted by hundreds, their followers, and the diligent readers of the *Tracts for the Times*, presently amounted to tens of thousands; and there is nothing to wonder at in this, if we remember the proneness of the human mind to rely upon authority, and to seek safety in definite obser-

vances. Far on in the nineteenth century, therefore, the zealous Protestants of the empire saw spectacles which filled them with anger and dismay—on the one hand, a striking increase of the Catholic body, from the earnestness with which noble and wealthy Catholics applied themselves to use the present crisis for the good of their Church; and on the other hand, the rise and spread of a body, within and from our own University of Oxford, who were always disparaging Protestantism, and themselves growing so like Catholics, that it was hard for the common run of men, who used Protestantism for a political cry, to make out the difference. From month to month, there were rumours of one or another Tractarian having gone over to Romanism —rumours which were highly resented, and proved in the *Tracts* to be necessarily false; and for a while, they were not true; but, in no long time, a conversion to Romanism began within the university, and spread so undeniably, that the kindred character of the principles of Romanism and Tractarianism has for some time ceased to be disputed. During this period, then, one of the three parties in the Church was succeeding in substituting for the previous idea of religion another whose popular spread made some good men's hearts fail them for fear. Theology in the priesthood, and unlimited obedience in the flock, were now to be the idea of a Christian Church. In many a church there was contention about wearing the surplice; about old and new or revived methods of celebrating the service; about the frequency of the administration of the communion; and other points which the bishops were as sorely perplexed as pressed to solve. As a body, the bishops showed themselves weak and still unprepared. There was no unity of view or action among them on the occurrence of this great schism in the Church; and the multitude added contempt of this weakness to their indignation at the conduct of the spiritual peers about the Reform Bill, and were at no pains to conceal their feelings. The Archbishop of Canterbury was mobbed at the doors of his own cathedral—pelted with brickbats, cabbage-stalks, and opprobrious words, to his extreme consternation. The Bishop of London had a year before been prevented from preaching at St. Ann's, Soho, by an in-

timation that when he rose in the pulpit, the larger part of the congregation would leave their seats. Much of this was political feeling; but it was aggravated, and not dispersed, by the irresolute and uncombined conduct of the prelates under the appeal of the Tractarians. The heads of the Church were evidently not ready for the crisis of the Church.

The strongest popular sympathy, in connection with this party, was with a clergyman here and there who fell a victim to his sense of duty in enforcing his rights—not from the love of lucre, but the fear of surrendering any of the prerogatives of his function. One of these, the Rev. Irvine Whitty, rector of a parish in Ireland, was shot after having brought forty-five suits for the recovery of tithes, at one sessions. Another was a clergyman in the south of England, who enforced his tithes, under a sense of duty to his Church, to a point which maddened his poor neighbours; and the general feeling was fearfully expressed by a man who shot him dead from behind a haycock in his own field. The popular resentment in these cases followed those who had instituted a false ideal of a Christian Church, rather than the weak men who had been mastered by that idea. While the pity for these victims was yet fresh, every one looked to see what would happen at the installation of the Duke of Wellington as chancellor of Oxford, at a time so critical. The proceedings there, while very amusing, were significant enough. The young men in the theatre are wont to express their partialities and dislikes, political and religious, on these occasions—thus giving notice to the world what it has to expect from the rising generation of professional men and legislators; and the watchwords and cries were never more significant than on the present occasion. There were thunders of applause when cheers were asked for the bishops, Mr. Stanley, and the Duke of Cumberland; and never-ending groans at the Irish Church commission, the administration, and the Gower Street Company—meaning the London University. 'The word the 'Dissenters' was received 'with a long-protracted snuffle, and an ejaculation of "Amen," from several voices, in imitation of the nasal twang of the conventicle.' This, again, was like a restoration of the seventeenth cen-

tury. The peculiar enmity against the Dissenters on this occasion, was a piece of retribution on a movement of the Moderate-Church party to obtain admission for them to the universities; and nothing could be more offensive than two cries and their reception—'The university and her privileges,' and 'London University and her want of privileges.' The cheers for Oxford and her exclusiveness were natural and fair enough; but the virulent desire to exclude the Dissenters from privilege everywhere, was well understood to be expressed by these lads on behalf of their class and order. Such were the doings—serious and playful—of the High-Church party during this period. As for the immediately opposing party—the Low-Church or Evangelical section—they were active, but less prosperous than they had been. It appeared that the Tractarian multitude was largely increased from the ranks of the Evangelical party. There were many lowly and tender spirits, worn and anxious with the care of working out their salvation by the constant upholding of their faith at a certain pitch, and afflicted with misgivings about the sufficiency of their personal interest in Christ, and of their assurance of safety, who were glad to turn at once into the shelter of a system, where they had the protection of a priesthood, which permitted them to repose their cares upon others, on the simple condition of obedience to definite commands, and which prescribed a clear ritual duty in discharge of obligations which had hitherto weighed heavily upon their consciences. It was natural that the numbers that went over from the Low to the High Church should be considerable. Some of the brightest lights of the sect, too, were extinguished within this period. Its honoured and beloved Wilberforce was laid in his grave during this time; and to no man did the sect owe so much. His May-day nature was too genial to be clouded by the gloomiest Calvinism. While striving through life to afflict himself with self-reproach and doubts of his safety, as well as to take upon himself—which he did in the noblest sincerity of heart—the woes of all who sinned and suffered, his glorious and exquisite nature broke through all factitious restraints, and made him free, joyous, and benign, as if he had never taken upon his lips that language of his

sect which abounds at once in denunciation and terror, in slavishness and pride. He was far above fear and haughtiness alike, though he might strive to feel both; and, while exhorting to the attainment of a specific faith, as the only security for salvation, he so abounded in good works as to earn the wondering veneration of all living men, and the gratitude of unborn generations. The affectionate, confiding, cheerful old man—wise as a sage, and fresh as an infant—sank into death just after learning that the Negro Emancipation Act might be considered safe; and when he closed his eyes, the brightest light of his sect went out. The influence of the body had been materially confirmed by the writings of Hannah More, whose books are a curious reflection of a part of the spirit of her time. The reflection may be regarded as exaggerated, however; for it would be hard to impute to the sect all the spiritual pride and censoriousness, the narrowness of view, and factitious interpretation of nature, life and Scripture, which pervade her writings. But the solemnity, the self-analysis, vigilance, asceticism, and intemperance of both fear and hope, are thoroughly characteristic of the sect, and merely aggravated in Hannah More, as they were neutralised in Wilberforce, by the constitution of the individual. Her writings had a vast circulation in their day; and, as they sprang from the spirit which originated the present Evangelical movement, so they largely assisted in kindling and spreading it.

The activity of the sect was shown during this period chiefly in its own walk—of denunciation, and obstructive asceticism. It does not appear to have taken any conspicuous part either with or against the government on the questions of the time regarding the rights, liabilities, and duties of the Church. But it begged for ordinances of religious humiliation under the infliction of the cholera—in some places held up the cholera as a judgment on the nation for its spiritual levity; instituted the Sabbatarian movement which has been revived, from time to time, to this day; obstructed the publication of geological knowledge, lest Scripture should be discredited by the disagreement of the beginning of Genesis with the discoveries of modern science: and discountenanced the musical

festivals which were a feature of the time, including, as they did, sacred music, and being frequently held in churches. While the Oxford sect were encouraging art, promoting freedom and gaiety of spirits in the intervals of religious observance—as on Sunday evenings—and holding that none but the priesthood have any concern with consequences while they scrupulously fulfil conditions, the sons of the Cambridge movement were acting in a curiously opposite manner. A Sabbatarian bill, full of insufferable and impracticable provisions, was called for once a year, by aristocratic gentlemen who could not suffer under it, while bringing it to bear upon the poor in their comfortless homes, or to prevent their going abroad: a bishop employed himself in invidiously counting the boats which passed under Putney Bridge on the Sunday; dissension was risked at the early meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, by clergymen who declared themselves resolved to defend the Mosaic scriptures from the inroads of scientific innovation; and certain newspapers praised the conduct of divines—and among others, the Bishop of London—for withdrawing from all appearance of countenancing the musical festival held in Westminster Abbey in 1834. The scruple was about 'employing a church as a place of sensual recreation;' and the doubt was presently extended to the use of music at all in religious worship. These differences between the two sects were practical assertions of their respective doctrines of priesthood and no priesthood; the insufficiency and the sufficiency of Scripture; and the ritual and ascetic modes of life and worship.

The action of the third party in the Church during this period is no less conspicuous than that of the first, and far more so than that of the second. This, the Moderate party, was that to which the ministry and, on the whole, parliament may be said to belong, if they could, with their diversity of view and unfixedness of theory, be said to belong to any one division. Ministers of state, and members of parliament, generally speaking, have not the training—that of the clergy on the one hand, and of the nonconformists on the other—which furnishes men with fixed principles of judgment and action on church matters;

and there is therefore no subject on which legislators usually appear so weak. The surest indication of their views given by ministers was by their clerical appointments; and the appointments under Lord Grey's administration—especially that of Dr. Whately to the archbishopric of Dublin—spoke plainly enough. Amidst their infirmity of action, and backwardness of speech, they showed their conviction that the Establishment needed reform; they made a large reduction of Irish bishopries, consented to a large reduction of Irish tithe—though the measure was not carried—and proposed to commute church rates in England, for the relief of the consciences of Dissenters. The Dissenters refused to accept anything short of a total abolition of these rates, seeing no relief to conscience, and no recognition of its rights, in a measure which would compel them to pay the same tax under another name; but the proposition showed the tendencies of ministers. Another decisive act of the same character was their favouring the petitions sent in, whether by Dissenters or members of the university, for the admission of Dissenters to degrees in the university. The exclusion of Dissenters by their being required to sign the thirty-nine articles was an innovation —declared to be so by the petitioners in the senate of the University of Cambridge—and a very injurious one to the interests of all parties. The restrictions were laid on in the reign of James I., in a manner informal and unprecedented, against the wishes of a large number of the then existing members, and in a time of extraordinary turbulence and spiritual oppression. The academical petitioners prayed for a restitution of their ancient laws and liberal usages, whereby many excellent citizens, now excluded by conscience from entering the universities, might be admitted to degrees, and thus made more available to the good of their country. When Lord Grey presented this petition in the Upper House, and Mr. Spring Rice in the Lower, both these ministers pledged themselves to use every effort in their individual capacities to carry the measure of relief proposed. Counter-petitions were sent in from both universities, much more numerously signed; and their advocates in the House and elsewhere appeared to think the question decided in equity by the prepon-

derance of opinion within the Universities; but the government and the Houses generally thought that the opinions of parliament, the Dissenters themselves, and the public at large, were no less pertinent than those of the privileged university men; and the debate was long and ardent. The case of the exclusionists was destroyed by the existing Cambridge practice of admitting Dissenters to everything but the honours. They might enter and study, and be on an equal footing with Churchmen till their twelfth term, when the demand upon them to sign the articles barred them from degrees. This was strongly presented by Mr. Spring Rice, in the debate on the Dissenters' Bill; while others showed how fearful was the snare to consciences in such a case—how powerful a temptation was presented to a young man to sign what he did not believe; and how injurious it was to the universities themselves, and to public rectitude, to enforce regulations which, in common with all religious tests, keep out the most valuable men—the conscientious—and let in the unscrupulous. On the other side, there was some ridicule of Dissenters for 'feeling so deeply, exclusion from the empty honour of a degree,' and apprehension that, if admitted to that, they would next crave possession of office and emolument in the universities; they were too small a minority to be worth altering the plans of the institutions for; yet they were so numerous, and increasing so fast, that they would soon overthrow the Church: the subscription to articles was a mere form which no reasonable man need scruple to go through; yet it was the bulwark of the Church which must not be touched: the Dissenters would carry off so few prizes in life, compared with Churchmen, that it was folly to suppose they lost anything worth debating about by the present arrangement; yet there was no saying what would become of the connection between Church and State if the liberal professions were thrown open as freely to nonconformists as to members of the Church. Amidst these mutually destructive pleas, the ministers declared their judgment to be in favour of recurrence to the ancient liberties of the universities, and deprecated all argument from possible future consequences, not contemplated in the present measures, and

which might very well be met in their own time, if they should ever arise. The scene at the third reading of the bill was disgracefully clamorous, so that the speaker himself was scarcely able to preserve his equanimity. The mover of the measure, Mr. Wood, could not be heard in his concluding explanations for the 'jeering, shouting, coughing, and crowing;' yet he obtained a majority of 164 against 75—a proof that ministers had on this occasion, and in that House, asserted liberal principles with sufficient plainness. Nor did they fail in the other House; though there the bill was thrown out by a majority of 187 to 85.

The apprehension in this case was that the Dissenters would endeavour to obtain a separation of the Church from the State. The promoters of Mr. Wood's bill saw that to refuse what appeared to them justice to the Dissenters was more dangerous to the Church than any recognition of liberty of conscience. The Church really was at that time in great danger. The High Churchmen and Dissenters were almost equally discontented at its connection with the state: and the intermediate parties were dissatisfied with its condition, and alarmed at its prospects. 'The Church as it now stands,' wrote Dr. Arnold in 1832, 'no human power can save.' He and other Moderate Churchmen, therefore, set to work to reform it, while the High Churchmen were proposing its being put under the care of its hierarchy, and the government were striving to disarm the enmity of the Dissenters—as far as they considered that enmity reasonable—and the Dissenters were striving for relief from the liability to support a Church of which they conscientiously disapproved.

Among the proposals offered by Churchmen for a reform of the Establishment at that time, the two most conspicuous publications were put forth by Lord Henley and Dr. Arnold. Lord Henley's plan was, that ecclesiastical affairs should be managed by a convocation; that the bishops should cease to sit in parliament; and that laymen should be wholly silent about matters of Church doctrine. This was so contrary to all Dr. Arnold's views of right, that it called forth his protest in the shape of a pamphlet on Church reform which, in that season of excitement, caused much

and angry controversy. 'I have one great principle which I never lose sight of,' wrote Dr. Arnold—'to insist strongly on the difference between Christian and non-Christian, and to sink into nothing the differences between Christian and Christian.' As he proceeds to say, all the world quarrelled with the one half of his principle or the other; but he succeeded in impressing his view at least upon the notice of society, if not upon its convictions. And so he did with regard to a truth, so obvious that it is difficult now to believe how lately society in general was blind to it—that the Church means not the priesthood, but the body of believers. In every possible way he reiterated this—insisting that Christianity recognised no priesthood—that the whole body of believers were equally brethren, and the clergy no more than brethren—till the truth took firm hold of the public mind, and the Tractarian party regarded Dr. Arnold as an impious leveller, and persecuted him for years with the moral weapons which alone the advancement of intelligence has left in the power of the bigot. 'Nothing, as it seems to me,' wrote Dr. Arnold, after issuing his plan, 'can save the Church but a union with the Dissenters.' Under the conviction of extreme danger to the Establishment, and of the calamity which its overthrow would be to the whole of society, he proposed changes, which, as he afterwards said, ought to be considered in connection with the alarms of the time, as well as on their own merits—by which, however, he was prepared to abide. After offering an earnest defence of the Establishment, and a statement of its dangers, he proposed, as the only safeguard, the admission of Dissenters within its pale, an accommodation of hours and throwing open of churches, which would enable all to worship conscientiously under the shelter of the general Church; and such an alteration of the ordinary services as should admit of their being joined in by a large number of Dissenters whose differences with the Church were not radical. He not only defended the presence of the bishops in parliament, but desired in every practicable way to amalgamate religious and secular interests. While doing his utmost for the Church and people whom he loved, he had, however, little hope, from the injustice and insolence with which he saw the Dissenters treated by so-called advocates of the

Church; and from the keenness with which, as he observed, the Dissenters understood and felt their principles and their position. 'If you see my pamphlet and postscript,' he wrote, 'you will see that I have kept clear of the mere secular questions of tithes and pluralities, and have argued for a comprehension on higher grounds. . . . . But I fear that our reforms, instead of labouring to unite the Dissenters with the Church, will confirm their separate existence by relieving them from all which they now complain of as a burden. And continuing distinct from the Church, will they not labour to effect its overthrow, till they bring us quite to the American platform?'

What answer were the Dissenters giving to this question? The plain answer was, that everything depended on what was meant in this case by overthrowing the Church. If the Church was taken in Dr. Arnold's own comprehensive sense of the great body of believers, or in the more limited sense of a body of believers in any particular form of doctrine, neither the Dissenters nor any one else wished to overthrow, or in any way to interfere with such a Church. But if the meaning was an Establishment which compelled its own support from those who disapproved of its doctrine and structure, it was certainly true, throughout that period, that a multitude of the Dissenters did desire the overthrow of the taxing and excluding power. Without concerning themselves about other people's belief and management of their own concerns, many of the Dissenters did exert themselves vigorously to obtain relief of conscience for themselves. Some helped to throw out Lord Althorp's measure for the commutation of church-rates, on the ground that it was not the amount of tax that they complained of, but the obligation to support a religious institution of which they disapproved. Several went to prison, during these and succeeding years, and lay there long, rather than pay a few shillings of church-rate. Many petitioned parliament for the removal of the bishops from the legislature. Many demanded admission to the universities. Many agitated for a dissolution of the union between Church and State. And the body generally gave their support to the propositions of the ministers to reduce the Irish Church, to review the resources of the

Church in England, to extinguish tithes, and to abolish pluralities.

Some curious incidents are found scattered through the registers of these years, which show the temper of the times, amidst the convulsion of religious parties. The work called *Froude's Remains* opens to the reader an astonishing picture of the state of mind and mode of life of the early Tractarians—with their talk of the 'detestable Reformation,' 'odious Protestantism,' the insufficiency of Scripture, and its utter destitution of assertion and evidence of the chief essential doctrines of the Christian faith; and their fastings, forms, and strong tendency to monachism. An analysis and comparison of their principles and modes of belief, their forms and organisation, present so curious and minute a resemblance to those of the Pharisees, as exhibited favourably by Josephus the Pharisee, as to make it astonishing that the parallelism could be overlooked by the members of the new sect themselves. From their great doctrines of the insufficiency of Scripture, the need of tradition, and priestly succession, to their daily religious forms, the resemblance is astonishing.

Next we come to several occasions of great amazement to members of the administration. Lord Althorp found himself worsted in an unexpected collision with refractory churchwardens, when he issued a circular to that body in England and Wales, preparatory to the institution of the ecclesiastical commission. The circular requested information as to the amount, ownership, and liabilities of church-property in their respective parishes. Some took no notice; some declined giving any information; and some wrote in a tone of which the following extract may serve as a specimen. It occurs in the midst of a lecture to the minister on the coronation oath, the sacredness of church-property, and so forth. 'It is the part of wise legislators to obtain the most accurate and authentic information, before they attempt to make enactments touching the property and vital interests of millions. Not so with the administration in which your lordship holds a prominent office: they prejudge a case—administer to the passions and vices of the mob, to obtain their concurrence and support—act in ignorance—and mar everything that

they pretend to mend. Nor are we satisfied that you and your colleagues have any more right to meddle with, so as to deteriorate, the property belonging to any clergyman, or any corporate body of the clergy, than the highwayman has to take your purse.' We are here furnished with proof that liberty of speech was unrestricted in Great Britain in 1834.

Next, we find Lord Grey, now old enough to be astonished at nothing, wholly taken by surprise by popular rebukes of his countenance of pluralities. He presented to the deanery of Down a clergyman who already held a living of £1200 a year, and gave as his reason, by the mouth of the Irish secretary, that 'it was not too much that such preferment should be bestowed on a son of the lord chancellor of Ireland.' So open an avowal of church preferment following on political connection, was caught up with the eagerness to be expected at such a season of crisis; and so was the explanation which the premier found himself obliged to authorise, of the circumstances under which he had given a stall at Westminster to his relative the Bishop of Hereford. Amazed as he was at the censure incurred by acts till now so little liable to question, the fact was so, and he had only to acquiesce in it; as had Lord Althorp, in the Dissenters being offended instead of gratified by his proposed church-rate measure. The most striking scene of this class, however, appears to have been an interview between the prime-minister and a deputation of Nottingham Dissenters. When these delegates presented their memorial, Lord Grey supposed that its contents were the same with those of other memorials from Dissenters; to which Mr. Howitt's reply was, that the paper itself would explain that better than he could, as the memorial proceeded from persons whose object was to express their own wishes, and not to look about to see what others were doing. They had prayed for the separation of Church and State. Lord Grey, who seems throughout this crisis to have been blind to the safety of perfect openness, to have always supposed that people meant more than they said, and to have approved of that method of proceeding, declared that he was sorry that ministers would be embarrassed, and parliament alarmed. He could

not see what more Dissenters could wish than relief from disabilities as to marriage, burial, registration, and such matters. The deputation replied, that their brethren had thought it best not to stop short of the broad ground of religious liberty. Still Lord Grey was perplexed, for he did not understand the principles of religious liberty. He asked if they wanted to do away with all state establishments of religion; to which Mr. Howitt's reply was, 'Precisely; that was what they desired.' He explained that in the opinion of the body he represented, a Christian government should protect Christianity; but that this could be done only by making all bodies of Christians equal before the law. Lord Grey indicated unconsciously the spirit and the fault of his government, by setting forth what he believed it would have been politic for the petitioners to have asked; and that the gaining of that step might have led to something more. The views of the petitioners, however, were not politic, but moral; and they were not a party whose obligations and conscience the prime minister was likely to be able to expound. The simple reply of the deputation conveyed a severe rebuke. They did not think it honest to ask for less than they desired to have, with a concealed view of obtaining more hereafter. Where a principle was concerned, they thought it right to make a plain and full assertion of it. In this course there was nothing disingenuous; and it left no ground for future discontent and misunderstanding. It might have been happy for the Whig administration if it had been early familiarised with the broad principle of religious liberty, and, yet more, with the spectacle of a calm and intrepid assertion of any principle in its full scope.

It may be remembered that, at a former period, one objection to the admission of Jews to parliament was that Quakers were excluded; to which the advocates of the Jews replied that they were quite ready to admit the Quakers. This was now done. Early in the session of 1833, Mr. Pease, member for South Durham, presented himself at the table, and claimed to make affirmation, instead of taking the oaths. He was ordered to withdraw, on his refusal to take the oaths, and a committee was appointed to consider of his case. The result was that the House,

on the recommendation of Mr. Wynn, the chairman of the committee, resolved to admit Mr. Pease, conceiving that if he became, by his entrance, liable to penalties in any courts, the risk was his own, and no concern of theirs. The ayes were loud and multitudinous, and there were no nays; and when the Quaker member appeared to make his affirmation, clothed in a complete suit of brown, elegant from its extreme neatness, he was received with a very cordial and general cheering. If one of the objections to the admission of Jews was thus done away, they did not at present profit by it. Their cause was annually pleaded by some Christians, as unquestionably and earnestly religious as any in the House; but the same mutually contradictory arguments for their exclusion were also repeated from year to year; and the religious conflicts of the time yielded no increase of civil rights to them.

And during these conflicts in the Church, and between its members and the Dissenters, Death was putting in his cold hand, to draw away one and another of the assertors of full religious liberty, to a region of utter stillness. Where angry voices were now clamouring, their loved tones would never more charm to silence the strife of tongues; where eyes were flashing in enthusiasm or passion, or congregations were met calmly to assert their rights of conscience, some grey-haired leaders were absent, and would never meet their brethren again. The Baptists had lost Robert Hall; or rather, the world had lost him. From him Sir J. Mackintosh said that he had learned more of principles than from all the books he had ever read; and while he could thus meet the strongest men on their own ground, he could charm the most ignorant, and rouse the most apathetic, by the light and glory which streamed from the fountain of the heart in floods of eloquence which it required only an open heart to receive. This great man's life was one of fearful suffering from disease—from anguish of body which, at one period, helped to overthrow his mind, and which, ever after his recovery from that insanity, kept him apparently too low and weak for duty. But duty was his strength; and in him was seen, from week to week, that marvel which has often attended a briefer martyrdom—that of the extinction of the sense of pain

under the strong workings of the nobler powers. When he feebly entered the pulpit, and rose feebly to speak, and spoke at first in a voice so low and husky as to make his hearers wish him at home and at rest, it was scarcely possible to believe him the Robert Hall whose vigorous championship of the rights of conscience, and broad assertion of a liberal philosophy, were before the world; but from moment to moment the fire was kindling and spreading within him—his torment subsided, his eye brightened, his voice grew strong and sweet—he was in heaven for the time, and carried his hearers a long way on towards it too. Amidst the conflicts of Christian faiths at this time, he disappeared; and the voice which, the more it roused souls, spread the more a deepening calm, would never again rebuke the strife of sects, and recommend to them, as he loved to do, 'the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' —Another was withdrawn, too, of whom no one knew whether he ought to be called Churchman or Dissenter. Rowland Hill had received deacon's orders, and always insisted that he was an Episcopalian clergyman; but he preached any and every where—in all sorts of chapels, in private rooms, under trees in parks, and in the open fields. His mission was—or seemed to himself to be—to find fault all round, except with persons too obscure to fix the eyes of men. He was the foe of John Wesley in early life, and afterwards the censor of all churches—having as vehement an intolerance of sectarianism as sects in his latter days had of each other. When the white hairs of fourscore years hung beside his brows, his rebukes had another power added to that of his strong and apt and piercing thought; and, aged as he was, he was missed at a time of conflict, when he would have proved himself almost as powerful in shaming men out of their religious contentions as Robert Hall in elevating them above them.—His organist, Charles Wesley, whose devout soul found utterance in music, was wont to soothe the troubled and abashed hearers of the eccentric pastor by divine strains, which were only in true harmony, however, with the prayers of the old divine; and now, the pastor being gone, the harmonist soon followed—wafted away, it might almost be said, in music. During the wanderings of his

last illness, he scarcely ceased his low singing of the airs of Handel. With him departed one more tranquillising and sanctifying influence from the religious world of the period. From four years old, when his music drew tears down the cheeks of listeners, to the age of seventy-six, he was a living harp, made resonant by every breath of thought, incident, and feeling; and a sad silence settled down upon his place when death had snapped the chords at last.—The learned Adam Clarke died during the fierceness of the sectarian conflict. In his youth, he had known and witnessed more of religious excitement than most men; for, when only nineteen, he was one of Wesley's itinerant preachers. The quietness of the study suited him better, however; and he withdrew more and more into it—delighting himself with various antiquarian research, but devoting his best resources of every kind to his great commentary on the Bible. He educated two Buddhist priests for the function of Christian missionaries in Ceylon, and baptised them; but that part of his work afterwards appeared to himself fruitless, for they became high-priests in their own temples at home. He was immersed in his biblical studies in his last days; and we may hope that the clamours of theological strife came softened to him in his retreat, and gave as little disturbance to his peace as to his faith; but his very quietness was an admonition which could ill be spared at such a time. One other there was whose departure at this juncture can never be alluded to without clouding the countenances of all who knew his story. Rammohun Roy was the descendant of Brahmins of a high order. He was born a British subject in India; and he used all the opportunity given him by birth and position for cultivating his mind, and enlarging his knowledge. He became a Christian, and gloried—till he came to England—in the liberty and liberality secured, as he believed, by that faith. He learned the languages necessary for studying the Scriptures in the original; and from them he directly derived his views of the comprehension, charity, and fundamental liberty of the Christian religion. He arrived in England in 1831, to watch over the reconstruction of the India Company's charter. The impressible Hindoo was sufficiently excited by the merely

political movements of the time; but its religious conflicts affected him much more deeply. He could not recognise the Christianity he had learned and so dearly loved amidst the pretension of the Tractarians, and the asceticism of the Evangelicals, and the wrath of the Irish Protestants, and the tumult of the Irish Catholics, and the conflicts between the Church and the Dissenters, and the widening split in the Scotch Church, and the profane antics of the Irvingites. He went to hear all within his reach—he was ready with sympathy for all who were not angry or proud—he poured out his wonder and sorrow at what he saw—and—he wasted, day by day. Other causes of trouble he is believed to have had; but it was the painful excitement of his sojourn in England that was fatal to him. A sickly hue—not concealed by the dark skin—settled upon his cheek; the hair round the turban, once so crisp, became thin and lank; the long fingers grew thinner and thinner; the cheerful voice grew listless and hoarse; the light of the eye went out; the tall frame was bent; and an expression of ghastliness gathered about the once mobile and smiling mouth. He sank at the first touch of illness, resigning himself to the Hindoo observances desired by his attendants, and was laid—not among any of the Christians whose strifes had so chilled and wounded his hope and heart—but alone, among the trees of a private garden belonging to the mansion where he died. It is not in our time, as it once was, that the heathen say, as they look thoughtfully on: 'See how these Christians love one another!' Rammohun Roy found the religious world in England very far indeed from even the view of one of her own Churchmen—'to insist strongly on the difference between Christian and non-Christian, and to sink into nothing the differences between Christian and Christian.'

The prevalent faith in Ireland lost a champion at this time in the death of the Roman Catholic Bishop Doyle.—And in Scotland, the schism was begun, which was to end in the secession of the Free Church from the Establishment. In 1834, the General Assembly, whose constitution had been much modified by the operation of the Scotch Borough-Reform Bill, passed a law which interfered considerably with the function of patronage, increasing the difficulty to

any patron of settling a minister who should be unacceptable to a congregation. Bodies of Churchmen had already seceded, and formed themselves into 'Voluntary Church Associations,' many Dissenters joining them; and now, many more Dissenters sided with the Church, on the passage of the act restraining the powers of patrons—which powers had been the most important original cause of dissent in Scotland. A fierce storm was evidently driving up; and we shall hereafter have to watch its explosion.

Amidst such turbulence there must be eccentricity. The intellectually and morally infirm become excited in noisy times, and cannot be kept quiet. Irving and his fantastical worship have been mentioned before, as a natural product of such a crisis; and now came the close of that tragedy—a tragedy which, like so many others, involved with its mournfulness much of the horrible and of the ludicrous. Canning had been one of his hearers. On Sir J. Mackintosh mentioning a prayer of Irving's—'We pray for those orphans who have been deprived of their parents, and are now thrown on the fatherhood of God'—Canning 'started' at the beauty of the expression, and made Sir J. Mackintosh take him to the Scotch Church the next Sunday. There was then no one of any kind of eminence who did not go to swell the crowd at the Scotch Church. But such fashions do not last. As soon as the social and sympathetic nature of the man was roused, and his love of sympathy and approbation kindled to an irrepressible flame, 'Fashion went her idle way,' as Carlyle says, 'to gaze on Egyptian crocodiles, Iroquois hunters, or what else there might be; forgot this man—who unhappily could not in his turn forget. . . . There was now the impossibility to live neglected; to walk on the quiet paths, where alone it is well with us. Singularity must henceforth succeed singularity.' By the time his church was ready, his fame had greatly sunk, and even the exhibition of the unknown tongues brought few strangers. There can be no doubt that some of his own flock, and a few more, were sincere believers in the gift of tongues; that of those who sat in that church in the grey of the wintry morning, listening for the shrill unearthly

sound from the lips of the 'gifted,' many believed that the end of the world was at hand; as indeed did some who were not usually superstitious. But Irving felt himself, for the last seven years of his life, neglected; and to him to be neglected was to be forlorn. He could not acquiesce; and he wore himself out in the effort to keep up incessant excitement in himself and his sect, and to draw in towards himself notice, wonder and sympathy from without. On the 2nd of May 1832, he was excluded from the Scotch Church, on the ground of heresy. It was after this that he betook himself to the little chapel in Newman Street, where the worst exhibitions of eccentricity took place. Through all these, he was believed by Dr. Chalmers 'to be a man of deep and devoted piety.' We have seen what he was as 'the blooming young man.' 'The last time I saw him,' says the same recorder, 'was three months ago, in London. Friendliness still beamed in his eyes, but now from amidst unquiet fire; his face was flaccid, wasted, unsound; hoary as with extreme age; he was trembling over the brink of the grave.' His last words were: 'In life and death I am the Lord's.' He was in his forty-third year. The body of his followers did not immediately melt away; and the name of an Irvingite may still be heard here and there; but there was no distinctive doctrine to hold them together—scarcely a bond but that of belief in Irving and the tongues; and the sect stands on record chiefly as an eccentricity—as a rebuke of the intemperance of the time.

In such a period, it is not wonderful that some, sickened with the apparent fruitlessness of the religion of unity, peace, and charity, should turn towards a profession which combined social with religious objects, and should become eccentric in their turn. The system called St. Simonism was preached in England in 1832, offering a new law of love and human equality, in the place of that Christian one which it assumed, from existing appearances, to have failed. Attempts were made to laugh it down; but the strife of the Christian world gave it a weight which could not be got rid of by mere scorn; and many listened, with new hope and a long-forgotten cheer, to the preaching of the golden rule of this new faith—that every one should

be employed according to his capacity, and rewarded according to his works. Society was to be ruled by persons of genius and virtue; and under them, all were to have a fair start—to be allowed the free use of their best powers, and reap their natural reward. The spiritual, intellectual, and industrial concerns of each and all were to be combined in a closer union than ever before; and thus, work was to be worship, and affectionate co-operation was to be piety. Amidst much that interested some of the best hearts, and engaged some of the noblest minds of the time, there were doctrines and provisions that would not stand a close examination. While it was supposed that the rulers would be persons of virtue and genius, the proposed organisation offered a scheme of a hierarchy which might easily, and would probably, become an intolerable despotism—a locked framework, in which individual freedom might become impossible. Still, from the nobleness of its social rule, from its union of religious appeal with social sympathy, and from the humbling and embarrassing condition of the religious world at the time, the disciples of St. Simon were not few in England, and their quality was of no mean order. At meetings in London, the French chief of the St. Simonian Church in London presided, in the costume of the sect, and told, by the lips of English friends, the story of its propagandism; for its missionaries were abroad, from Constantinople to the Mississippi. Among the speakers, stands the name of the virtuous Rowland Detrosier, the chairman of the Manchester Political Union—as an inquirer and assistant, not an advocate; and it may be noted among the signs of the times that a system of communism, elevated, just, and spiritualised enough to engage the inquiring sympathy of men of his class, should then, amidst the haughty claims of the churches, obtain any footing in England. Rowland Detrosier died the next year, 'directing his remains to be devoted to the purposes of science;' and St. Simonism did not long survive him. There may be wardrobes where the dress of the sect is laid by in lavender, and now and then wistfully looked at; there may be times when families and friends revert to the golden rule of labour and its recompense, and speculate on when it will come into

practice; but St. Simonism has long taken its place among the religious and social eccentricities of its day.

The most evident practical result of the religious conflicts of the period was the quickening of the purposes of the government to get out the ecclesiastical commission which was to inquire into the condition of the Church in England, and redistribute its temporalities. This commission was set to work in 1835. As for the rest, it may be hoped that a multitude remembered at the time, as we do now, that noise and confusion are in their very nature superficial and fitful. Turbulence is on the surface; calmness is within the depths. Christianity in England was far from being like what this narrative of critical phenomena, taken alone, would represent it. For every conspicuous personage who was announcing or denouncing, or remonstrating or propounding, or anathematising or demanding, there were hundreds or thousands of quiet Christians at home, humbly living by their light, and religiously following peace with all men. Because the faith was, visibly, before the eyes of all men, corrupted in high places, it was not necessarily spoiled to the multitude who dwelt below. To the thousands who sat on the grass in the wilderness of life, Christ might be breaking bread, while His handful of preachers and witnesses were contending which should be greatest. If it was scarcely possible at the moment for all to help visiting some of the pain and shame of such contentions on the religion which was their ostensible theme, it would be folly and ignorance for us to do so now. The controversialists and brawlers of the time were not the British nation; and those to whom the Christian religion was dear as glad tidings of peace and good-will, lived in that sunshine, and only wondered at the far-off blackness and tempest which did not overcloud their sky.

CHAPTER XI.

Finance—First Budget—Statements of 1832 and 1833—Assessed Taxes Movement—The House-tax—Statement of 1834—Westminster Election—Malt-tax—Surplus of 1834—The Corn-laws—Total Reductions—Poor-law for Ireland—Registry of Deeds—The Ballot—Military Flogging—Impressment of Seamen.

IF the unreasonable expectations of the country were a hardship upon the Whig administration generally, there was no particular in which such expectations were more perplexing than that of finance. The nation ought to have known that this was a point on which the Whigs must be weak—in practice, if not in conception. There is, perhaps, no office of the government so difficult to fill well as that of chancellor of the exchequer; and certainly none in regard to which it is so impossible to anticipate correctly whether any man will fill it well or ill. He may have gone through all the preparatory offices, and be deservedly looked up to for all the qualities which all these offices can elicit; and yet, when he takes the one other step, he, for his part, may find himself in a wholly new world, for which his previous training may have done little to fit him, and everybody else may find him a very bad chancellor of the exchequer. The only certain point about the matter is, that a man who has had no training, and who is moreover a novice in executive politics altogether, cannot fill the office well. This was Lord Althorp's constant plea—urged even pathetically. He was wont to say that he was forced into the office against his will; he was wont to solicit information, as an alms, on every hand; he entreated every one to observe the tentative character of his proposals, and to believe that he was quite ready to give them up; and he conveyed the impression, every time he opened any financial subject, that he supposed the chances to be against his information being correct, and his plans feasible. Yet, with all this candour on his part, the people were slow to learn the

incapacity of Whig administrations in matters of finance. When the sayings of the Whigs in opposition were remembered—their complaints of heavy taxation, their demands of reform, their criticisms on financial measures—the multitude, including whole classes who ought to have known better, looked for a large immediate reduction of taxation—a prodigious lightening of the national burdens—as soon as a liberal minister should take the national accounts in hand. At the end of their first term, when Lord Grey went out of office, there was something ludicrous as well as humbling in looking back to see what had been done. The ministers and their friends complained of factious opposition in parliament, and of faithlessness and impertinence in their underlings: complaints which were a mere confession of weakness; for the Duke of Wellington's government had practically shown their willingness to reduce the national burdens; and there was no party, in or out of parliament, which was not ready for as much financial reform as the Whig government was able to conceive of: and, as for the underlings, this was a sort of business which it was not in their power to obstruct, if it had been pursued on any broad and clear principle, such as parliament and the country were able to understand and to sustain. But there was no principle in the case, nor the remotest conception of any; while there was a wholly gratuitous violation of principle, as Lord Althorp himself avowed, on the very first occasion of producing his budget.

At the outset of his explanations, the chancellor of the exchequer declared that the government adopted the principles and views of Sir Henry Parnell, in his work on financial reform; a declaration which the author, who was present, would naturally wish unmade, when he heard, year after year, Lord Althorp's recommendations of his budget.

The subject was opened on the 11th of February 1831, when it was yet too early for much more than a declaration of intentions. Lord Althorp referred to the national expectation of great reductions of abuse and expense, and said that the government proposed to reduce eventually 210 places under its own appointment. The reduction

would for some time be merely of patronage, and not of expense; and of the 210, 71 were officers of the dock-yards, 60 in the Irish post-office, and 46 receivers of taxes in England, whose salaries could not be large; so that the benefit was more in the example than in any immediate relief. The surplus this year would be small—about £300,000; an amount which some of the friends of government considered too small to justify any reduction of taxation; but Lord Althorp seems to have considered himself bound to make some immediate changes. He seems to have been unaware that a mere transposition, such as he proposed, can give little relief, while any disarrangement is in itself an evil requiring relief to compensate for it; and that a partial reduction of several taxes tells far less than a total abolition of a few, because the expenses of collection and management remain, instead of being swept away. In both these points his scheme was faulty; and Sir Henry Parnell presently took occasion to deny its being formed on his principles. He approved of taking off taxes; but there was nothing in his book to sanction laying on new duties when the public service could be provided for without.

There was to be a reduction of the duties on tobacco, on newspapers, stamps and advertisements, on candles and tallow, and an abolition of duties on sea-borne coal, on printed calicoes, on glass, and on auctions. As a deficiency of above three millions would be thus caused, compensation must be found. For this end, there was to be an equalisation of the duties on foreign wines, on Baltic and Canada timber, and on large and small coal for export; and several new duties were to be laid on, of which the worst in principle—and admitted by Lord Althorp himself to be so—was that of an increase to 1*d.* per lb. on all raw cotton imported. The taxing of the raw material of manufactures, he declared to be an essential mischief, 'which, however, the advantages would, he hoped, counterbalance.' He pleaded its smallness in extenuation of its badness. The other new taxes were on travellers by steam-boat, on the transfer of landed property, and on the *bonâ fide* transfer of property in the funds.

The whole budget was severely treated; but the outcry

on this last item was the loudest. Lord Althorp gave it up, and also the steam-boat tax. The duty on the transfer of real property of course went too; and to make up for the cutting-off of these proposed resources, the duties on tobacco and glass must be retained. Thus the greater part of the plan was gone already; and a defeat on the timber-duties question awaited the minister. He proposed, on the 18th of March, to render the change of duties more gradual, and so involved the fiscal question with the wider one of free-trade, that the opposition required either a committee of inquiry, or time for consideration. Lord Althorp declined both, and was left in a minority of 46. The duty on Cape wines was again altered, and the penny cotton-duty was reduced to 5-8ths of a penny; and thus scarcely anything remained of Lord Althorp's first budget.

This compelled him to bring forward the subject again within the year; and October was the time, as parliament was sitting at that unusual season on account of the Reform Bill. The most remarkable fact in connection with this statement was the result of the reductions in the excise and customs, made by the late government within two years. The estimated reductions had amounted to nearly four millions and a half, while the actual decrease had been little more than two millions and a half, in the last year. Lord Althorp felt confident that he did not make any exaggerated statement when he assured the House that it might rely on a surplus for the year of £493,479. 'He had examined the statements in every way that he could, and he was sure that he was not chargeable with any exaggeration.' This was on the 3rd of October. On the 17th, the Duke of Wellington gave warning that the ministers would find themselves mistaken in their hopes of half a million of surplus, and declared that the utmost surplus could not exceed £10,000; but Lord Grey 'could not see on what principle' the statement of Lord Althorp could be disallowed, and was confident that government might have taken credit for a much larger surplus. The event was such as might make the Duke himself as much surprised as the ministers were ashamed.

From the occupation of parliament and the country with the Reform Bill, it was the 27th of July before Lord Althorp could bring forward his financial statement, though he must long have been wishing the exposure well over. His delightful candour, however, smoothed his way through difficulties which would have been most galling to men less truthful or more self-seeking. 'I am quite aware,' said he, 'that my statement must be one which a chancellor of the exchequer has been unaccustomed to make of late years; and therefore I have to throw myself upon the indulgence of the House.' The surplus of last autumn had dwindled away, month by month; and instead of the half-million anticipated, there was now a deficiency of more than £600,000. Under such circumstances, no reduction of the public burdens could be proposed; and the ministers were persuaded, now that they saw things by the lights of office—which really are essential to a perfect judgment of such matters—that the vigorous reforms under the late government had carried reduction as far as it could safely go. The present ministers had cut down the estimates to the amount of £2,000,000, and declared that henceforth any relief to the people must come from economy in the departments, to obtain a surplus, and not from reduction of taxes. The unexpected deficiency was ascribed in part to the arrival of the cholera, and to political excitement; but there was also an oversight of Lord Althorp's, pointed out by himself: he had forgotten the expiration of the beer-duties in the spring, which made a difference of £350,000.

On the next occasion, he presented his budget for the first time to a reformed parliament. This was on the 19th of April 1833. First, he gave a good account of the reductions of official expenses by Lord Grey's government. They had abolished 1307 places, with an immediate saving of £192,000, and a prospective one of £38,000 more, on the expiration of the retired allowances; and some saving in such allowances had taken place in another direction, by bringing retired revenue-servants into active duty again, as opportunity offered. Lord Aberdeen's reductions in the diplomatic department, under the late administration, had

been carried on, till they now reached nearly £100,000. There was now a surplus, and one considerable enough to do more than pay off the previous deficiency; and Lord Althorp ascribed this to the reduction in the estimates, and not to any remarkable improvement in the yield of the taxes. It enabled him to offer something in the shape of a boon to the tax-payers; and what he proposed was this: to abolish the duty on tiles, and the cotton-duty laid on two years before; and to reduce the duty on soap one half, and, in various proportions, the duties on advertisements, and on marine insurance, and several assessed taxes.

It was clear that the ministers had no ideas on the subject of taxation—no principle, no orderly plan. There was a touch here and a touch there—now a notice of a little experiment, and again a retractation of it; but nowhere a broad procedure based on sound reasons. The whole management was not only empirical, but desultory. To men who knew anything of the principles of finance, certain lessons of this year—this first year of a reformed parliament—would have been painfully impressive; only, that to men who duly felt the responsibilities of government they could not have occurred.

'When I laid the additional duty on raw cotton in 1831' —there had been an almost inappreciable *ad valorem* duty before—'I said that it was radically wrong in principle,' Lord Althorp now declared with an unabashed air, 'and that, on the first opportunity which arrived, it ought to be reduced. That opportunity has now arrived.' It seems never to have occurred to him that there was anything wrong in thus playing fast and loose with such a power of interference as that of taxation—that there was any objection to laying on a tax one year and taking it off another, deranging the course of manufactures and commerce at each operation. Nor, on any one of the many occasions of his acknowledgment of the vicious principle of the taxes which he imposed or retained, did he show any shame in alleging the most trifling pretences of temporary convenience. Some astonished observers at last came to the conclusion that there was something behind—that Lord Althorp himself, the most ingenuous

of men, assigned one set of reasons, and acted upon another. And in truth, there *was* something behind; and it *was* the practice of this administration, and perhaps its very worst fault, to assign bad reasons for good acts, and insufficient reasons for bad acts.

Some reference has been made before to the fatal practice of the Whig administrations of yielding to clamour whatever it chose to demand; and, after a time, to yield nothing but what was demanded by clamour. It was pointed out that this really revolutionary system began with the Tories —with the protracted refusal of the Catholic claims; but it has since become a distinguishing characteristic of what are called liberal administrations. In this particular, in which Lord Grey's cabinet as a whole was inculpated, Lord Althorp was perhaps the greatest sinner; and a clear publication of the fact was before the world during this and the succeeding session. At a public meeting, at this date, when some proposition about Dissenters' rights was made, the mover was entreated to wait and be patient, and not embarrass the ministry. 'Not embarrass the ministry!' he cried. 'Why, I never found yet that anything was to be had but by embarrassing the ministry;' and his closing words were lost amidst vociferous cheering. And of the whole administration, it was understood that the chancellor of the exchequer was the most impressible by clamour, from his good-nature, his indolence, his consciousness of unfitness for his work, and his consequent lack of self-reliance. Accordingly, he became the butt of all discontented tax-payers; and they made him so miserable that he daily sighed to be able either to repeal all taxes whatever, or to hide himself on one of his stock-farms. From the moment he could not but see that the turbulent among the tax-paying multitude had discovered how to manage him, he lost all energy; and the movement against the assessed taxes reached a point which disturbed the peace of the metropolis. And not only of the metropolis; for in several large towns there were threatenings of fiscal rebellion, and everywhere a strong disgust at the ineptitude of the finance minister.

In answer to the universal complaints of the injury and inconvenience of our methods of taxation, by which

industry was fettered, food made dear, knowledge taxed, incomes rendered uncertain, and tempers tried past endurance, the government thought it enough to say that these things could not be remedied without making 'an extensive change in the whole financial system.' But thi extensive change in the financial system of the country was one of the promises of the reform ministry—one of the labours to which a reformed parliament was pledged. It was told in the House how astonished an eminent foreigner, M. Simond, was at seeing an exciseman in a glass-house quietly permitted to interfere with the process of manufacture, and how earnestly M. Simond inquired whether the spirit of the English people could really patiently endure such an intrusion. It was asked why the English people should endure such a method of taxation—why there should not be a complete revision and reform of our financial system—why there had not been already such a reform—why a year had been lost. The discussion of this matter, the pressing of these questions in the House, and, through the newspapers, in the country, became very urgent during this session of 1833; and Lord Althorp had nothing, as yet, to reply, but that he would take off a little here and lay on a little there, and that to do more would be 'to make an extensive change in the whole financial system.' Certain classes of tax-payers therefore took the matter into their own hands. A prodigious outcry was raised against the house and window taxes.

These two taxes were always mentioned together by those who desired to get rid of them; but many thought—and among them the chancellor of the exchequer—that while the window-tax was one of the worst on the list, the house-duty was one of the best. The window-tax is a duty upon fresh air, sunshine, and health; the house-duty had the merits of being a direct tax, and of falling on a class particularly well able to pay it—that of proprietors of houses. The truth of the matter was, however, that the tenants of London houses—a numerous class of shopkeepers and others occupying large premises—paid the tax during occupancy, the amount being allowed for in their rent. By obtaining a repeal of the tax, they would pocket its amount during the remainder of their lease; and the

event proved that this was motive enough for a noisy agitation. It never was general in the country; it did not spread beyond London and two or three of the large towns; but it was too much for the energy of Lord Althorp. Associations were formed to resist the payment of these taxes; no purchasers came forward for goods seized for arrears of these duties: when the levy was made, it was necessary to bring out, not only a large force of police, but of soldiery; and these were got rid of by terrified lodgers or friends of the recusants handing the money out of upper windows. Long and noisy processions of London tenants —chiefly shopkeepers of the west end—came to besiege the treasury chambers: and for some hours, it was difficult for horse or foot passengers to make their way between Parliament Street and Charing Cross. Lord Althorp was earnestly assured by those who understood the parties—and he declared that he believed it himself—that the outcry was only tentative, and the discontent partial and selfish; yet he gave way, as will be presently seen. 'What taxes would you reduce, if you were in my place?' he asked of an adviser. 'Certainly not the house-duty—that is nearly the best tax we have,' was the reply. 'It is,' he said—'it is a good tax; yet you would yield if you had been in Whitehall yesterday, and had heard the clamour that I had to hear.' 'It is only the west-end shopkeepers, who want to pocket a bonus.' 'I know it; but what can I do?' This was early in 1834; and it was only in the preceding May that the chancellor had obtained the sanction of parliament to the continuance of the house and window taxes by a majority of 273 to 124. On the 21st of next February, he incurred the banter of Sir Robert Peel, by his change of tone on this question. He was rather disposed to remit the house-tax, though he believed that it was not the best that he could remit—he could have put down the resistance to the tax; yet the resistance was partly the reason of his giving up the point. 'He would leave the matter open for a certain period, so that each member might present his plan to the House; and if any honourable gentleman should succeed in inducing the House to prefer any other tax for remission, he would not propose to repeal the house-tax.' This was a direct invitation to clamour

against every tax on the list. 'The noble lord,' said Sir Robert Peel, 'was the last person to object to this gentle violence. There never was so clear an invitation to be ravished. . . . . He would, for six months, give a clear stage and no favour to all those who were anxious to make him change his course.' After this, it was no matter of wonder that the house-tax figured at the head of the reductions proposed, when the budget was brought forward, in the next July. 'The first, and by much the largest,' said Lord Althorp, 'was that reduction which he had already proposed, of the house-tax, amounting to £1,200,000.' The window-tax was at the same time slightly reduced, at a cost of £35,000—the relief being given to small farm-houses.

The excitements of the times in relation to these duties, and the difficulties of ministers, were increased by the necessity of a Westminster election, on account of them. Sir J. C. Hobhouse, one of the representatives of Westminster, and secretary for Ireland, had repeatedly condemned these taxes in his addresses to his constituents, and in his speeches in parliament. When Lord Althorp began to waver, Sir J. C. Hobhouse absented himself from divisions; and after doing so on the 30th of April, was called to account by his constituents, and resigned both his office and his seat. He presented himself again for Westminster, but was thrown out; and the election was conducted with a violence, and an enmity towards the government, which showed how far it was possible to sink in popularity in one year, by a timid or indolent omission to redeem pledges of financial reform given in days of struggle and hope. There is no doubt that this Westminster election determined much of the character of the next year's budget, though the chancellor of the exchequer was not qualified, as he himself declared, to redeem the promises of the government, by proposing a large measure of financial reform.

If the administration showed itself irresolute and imperfectly informed, it was not the House of Commons that had at this time any right to offer ridicule or reproach. On the 26th of April 1833, a reduction of the malt-tax was proposed by Sir William Ingilby—a reduction amounting

to at least as much as the relief proposed from the repeal of the house-duty. The chancellor of the exchequer remonstrated, declaring that such a reduction would compel the imposition of a property-tax. The House decided in its favour, however, by a majority of 10; and the ministers found themselves in a difficulty under which they must have time for deliberation. The only declaration made on the instant by Lord Althorp was, that he should be ashamed not to acquiesce in the expressed decision of the House. On consideration, however, it did not appear necessary so to acquiesce; and it was resolved in the cabinet to induce the Commons to rescind their vote. Lord Althorp tendered his resignation the morning after being outvoted on Sir William Ingilby's motion; but Lord Grey advised the king not to receive it. The country gentlemen were by some means made to understand that any reduction of taxation begun by them would be taken out of their hands by the manufacturing interest, with more vigour than any other party could command. Lord Althorp was persuaded that he did not stand pledged to abide by the decision of the House, as his words at the moment were taken to imply, and the Commons rescinded, on the Tuesday night, the vote of the preceding Friday on the malt-tax. It is not to be wondered at that the people were becoming dissatisfied with the way in which their financial affairs were decided on and conducted. Once more during the session of 1833, the chancellor of the exchequer was in a minority on such matters. On the 16th of July, Mr. Ruthven carried a resolution in favour of relief by the abolition of all sinecures, obtaining a majority of nine over the government. On this occasion, however, it was not necessary to act on the resolution, or to resign in consequence of it; and nothing ensued from this ministerial defeat.

Next year, affairs looked better. The estimates were reduced half a million; and Sir James Graham had been so active in his office at the admiralty, that a reduction of nearly a million and a quarter on an expenditure of six millions had taken place in three years. The surplus for the year, when the accounts were made up in July 1834, was upwards of two millions. There would be a smaller surplus next year, because the interest of the twenty

millions given to the West India planters was to be payable from the ensuing 1st of August; but there would still be enough to admit of a considerable reduction of taxation—probably £1,620,000. There was no occasion now for O'Connell to renew his proposition, made in April, to attack the debt by reducing the interest arbitrarily one-sixth; and then again, when wanted—a proposition which excited so much outcry as made him glad to be silent upon it henceforth, and never more to try the House of Commons with talk of the 'cant of national faith.' It was no longer necessary, the House thought this year, to repeal the malt-duty; and Mr. Cobbett's motion for its abolition was voted down by an immense majority. It was not thought necessary for the House to attend to the subject of duties on food, as Mr. Hume proposed. Some members of the government voted with Mr. Hume, being previously pledged to advocate relaxations in the corn-laws. Lord Althorp, though made fully aware, long before, that the new poor-law was framed on the supposition of the repeal of the corn-laws, declared to the House that he should meet the motion with a direct negative, 'although against his theoretical opinion;' and also, that 'it was not the intention of the government, as a government, to introduce any measure for the alteration of the corn-laws, and that government, as a government, would not support any such measure, if introduced.' What remained was for the chancellor of the exchequer to say what he could propose for the relief of the tax-paying public.

By some changes in the duties on the licences of dealers in spirits and in beer, he expected to raise his surplus to £1,815,000. Out of this he proposed to repeal the house-tax—as before declared—several minor assessed taxes, some small customs and excise duties which interfered with manufactures, and one of the stamp-duties—that on almanacs, which produced some popular irritation. All these together would amount to upwards of a million and a half. On this, the last occasion of Lord Althorp's responsibility to parliament as chancellor of the exchequer, he spoke cheerfully of the condition and prospects of the country. While between six and seven millions of taxes had been taken off during his term of office—immediately

after large reductions by the preceding ministry—the income was reduced only £3,000,000. The reduction of the expenditure had been nearly two millions and a half; and provision would actually be made for our new obligations to the West Indies, not only without increased taxation, but at the same time with a diminution. It was certainly true that great improvements were taking place, and considerable relief granted from year to year, though the nation had yet to wait for an able administration of its financial affairs, and for anything approaching to reform, or even revision of its financial system.

Before the new English poor-law was framed, a poor-law for Ireland was proposed in parliament by Mr. Sadler, in June 1832. For various reasons, the general feeling was strongly against it. Several members implored the House and the ministry not to subject Ireland to such a curse as the poor-law had been to England, till it should be proved that there was no better way of relieving the indigent. Ministers wished to wait to see the result of certain new arrangements in Ireland about rating for the benefit of the sick, from the success of which some hints might be derived. There was no subject on which O'Connell vacillated more than this; and there is no doubt that his irresolution was real. He had promised the poor Irish that when he came into parliament, he would never rest till he had obtained a poor-law for them; but now he opposed Mr. Sadler's resolutions, and frequently afterwards alleged that a compulsory charity was irreligious, and tended to lessen the free alms-giving which he regarded as a duty and grace enjoined and commended in Scripture. In saying this, he truly represented the Catholic portion of his countrymen, and exhibited the main difficulty of that most difficult problem—how to work a poor-law in the Catholic and most pauperised districts of Ireland. At a subsequent time, O'Connell assented to a poor-law, when in London, among reasoning men; and then again he repented, on the other side the Channel, and implored pardon of God and man for his irreligious compliance; and then, once more, be changed—not through profligacy in this case, apparently, but through a conflict between two sets of ideas and feelings which could not be made to agree.

He had time for consideration; for the commission sent out to investigate and report upon the applicability of a poor-law to Ireland did not go forth on their work till 1835; but O'Connell was no more ready with a decision then than three years before.

The refusal of parliament during this period to entertain any proposition for a registry of deeds relating to real property, was striking and perplexing to foreigners and persons unfamiliar with the interests of the landed aristocracy in our country. Bills were brought in by Mr. Campbell and Mr. William Brougham—measures which were declared to be well framed and unobjectionable—yet the House of Commons rejected them again and again. No one openly disputed the need of such a registry. It was allowed to be a hardship that when a purchaser was buying land, he had no means of clearly ascertaining whether he had access to all the deeds which could affect the title. It was admitted that nothing could be more just, more simply convenient, than a general registry of deeds, which should put a purchaser in possession of his own case, and secure him from all risk from evidence, concealed through design or accident, which might affect his purchase after he had paid for it. Yet the House would not accept any measure of the kind; and both Mr. Campbell's and Mr. W. Brougham's were got rid of on such frivolous pretences as to convey an irresistible impression that the landed interest had unavowed reasons for what they did. When they thus set people guessing, the reason assigned was that they were afraid of their mortgages becoming known—afraid that it would no longer remain a secret how their estates were encumbered. Mr. Campbell's first announcement of his measure was in December 1830, and Mr. W. Brougham's in May 1833; and the second rejection of the latter measure took place May 7, 1834, by a majority of 161 to 45 against the second reading; and a curious social symptom this appeared to all thoughtful observers.

There was another case, far more important than this, in regard to which the whole world was aware that men's speech did not answer to their thought. There was another measure which parliament rejected, year after

year, for pretences so utterly untenable as to show that the real reasons for opposition were unavowed. This was the ballot. Of course, every man was at full liberty to dislike and deprecate the ballot. The peculiarity of the case was in the assigning of various reasons so incompatible as to make the listener look round, and wonder at the gravity with which the argument was carried on. The case to be met was simply this. The extended franchise was not fully exercised; the negligent possessors were lectured, rebuked, sounded, canvassed; but they, in large numbers, omitted to vote. Anxious as they had been for the Reform Bill, they now did not use its privileges. Their reason was that the bill did not furnish the needful safeguards of their new responsibility. Intimidation of voters ran as high as ever; and Lord Althorp, the long-declared advocate of the protecting ballot, now thought himself obliged to be mute and idle, and leave the tradesman and the farmer, and every voter who had any connection with a class above him, to the mercy of his neighbours or his patrons. Year after year did Mr. Grote bring forward his motion in favour of the ballot for the protection of voters; and year after year was he met by the same incompatible objections—that it would not work, and that it would work too well; that Britons will not be bribed, and that they would be bribed incessantly under the cover of the ballot; that the voting classes are of too high an order to be insulted with such a protection, and that broad publicity was necessary to keep them up to their duty. Thus the question was met, from year to year, till, through a singular virtual coalition between two opposite classes, the popular demand for the ballot was overpowered. The aristocracy would not surrender their influence over the dependent class of voters; and that influence was known to be so powerful, through intimidation where bribery would not avail, that the vast multitude of non-electors took upon themselves to watch over its operation. The electors were their representatives; and this secondary representation they were resolved not to relinquish. They could send up an influence from below as powerful as that which brooded from above, and they would not, any more than the aristocracy, have it intercepted by the ballot.

Such was the issue of the painful state of the question which lasted during this period, when those who declared in favour of this protection of voters would not act; and those who did, were insulted with pleas which were understood all round to be mere disguises of real reasons which no man had courage to avow. Something would have been gained to the heart and courage of the nation, and probably nothing lost to its reputation, if the annual debate had been cut short with the declaration: 'We will not give up our power over the voting classes. By mere threats of ruin we can now make tools of our tradesmen and farmers, or keep them quiet; and no harm is done. If they were to be really free in the exercise of the franchise, there is no saying what confusion would ensue; and we only know that all control from us would be at an end.' Such was the state of things after the passage of the Reform Bill; a state of things sickening to the hearts of many thousands of husbands and fathers who would have dared anything for themselves, but could not see that their political duty required them to bring ruin on their households. Such neglected to qualify—setting a bad example therein, and in so far abrogating the Reform Act. And in the midst of a representative system like this—a system which worked imperfectly where it did not work viciously, the ministers took occasion to say, on all fair opportunities, that they considered the Reform Act final. While it was scarcely possible to exaggerate its value, and the importance of the era which it formed, it was because it opened the way to the achievement hereafter of a real representation, and not because the largest classes of the British nation were actually and immediately represented much more truly than before. As the ballot was not decreed in its own time, it only remains to be seen what stronger security for true representation will have to be accorded at a later day. That such an event is in store is an irresistible conclusion from reading the debates on the ballot during the period under review.

The question of military flogging was brought forward year by year by Mr. Hume; and by the session of 1833 it was clear that the debate was becoming more and more embarrassing to men who had always spoken with a

natural horror of the flogging of soldiers, but who had lately become aware of the weight of military authority on the other side. After the summer of 1832, every one had perceived that the abolition of military flogging was only a question of time. In May of that year, a private of the Scots Greys had been flogged under circumstances which induced a universal belief that his real offence was not a breach of discipline in the riding-school, as alleged, but his having written a political letter to a newspaper. A court of inquiry was held in July, and a sort of reprimand was adjudged to the officer in command. The publicity given to the facts greatly aided the cause advocated by Mr. Hume; and in the next division there was a majority of only eleven votes in a House of 291 members in favour of the existing system of military punishment. The other fearful tyranny which occurs to all minds in connection with this—the impressment of seamen—was now beginning to be treated in a tone of seriousness and humanity; and in August 1833, a division took place less unworthy of the eighteenth year of peace, than some that had preceded. There was a majority of only five against Mr. Buckingham's motion that it was the duty of the House to avail itself of the season of peace to inquire whether there was not some better method than that of impressment for manning ships in time of war.

CHAPTER XII.

Popular Discontents—Trades Unions—Dorsetshire Labourers—Day of the Trades—Changes in the Cabinet—Late Intrigues—Irish Tithes—The Lord-Chancellor—Lord Durham—The Grey Banquet—Prospect of New Parties—Dissolution of the Ministry—Retirement of Lord Brougham—Lord Lyndhurst succeeds—Lord Brougham's Law Reforms—Local Courts Bill—Chancery Reform—Retirement of Lord Spencer.

A GLIMPSE is afforded us at this period of that awful interior of the history of the time of which registers and reports tell nothing. They tell nothing, because they know nothing, of those movements in some corner of the national

heart and mind which are of graver moment than anything that is laid open to all eyes. Things were going on in the year 1834 which disheartened the few of the upper classes who knew of them, and whose calculations had been too sanguine as to the social effects of nineteen years of peace, and of four of liberal government. The good effects of peace and liberal government were in fact shown —not in the absence of ignorance and guilt among the people—but in the small results of their guilt and ignorance. If Sidmouth and Castlereagh had been in power, the year 1834 would have been as black a one to remember as that of the Cato-street conspiracy.

The prevalence and power of trades-unions have been referred to; and the murder of a Manchester manufacturer was mentioned at its date. The power and tyranny of the unions went on increasing, till in 1834, it became a serious question whether their existence was compatible with the organisation of society in England. Half-a-dozen uneducated men—sometimes one able but half-informed man—commanded an obedient host of tens of thousands; and, though the capitalists usually beat in the competition for victory set up by the labourers, the power of the latter over the production and commerce of the country was very great. At this time, a new combination gave an enormous increase of power into their hands. Hitherto each body had struck for an advance of wages for itself. Now, the various trades combined for the purpose of supporting one another by turns. Some were to work, and maintain others who were contending for their objects; and when these objects were gained, the good office was to be reciprocated. If the great body of labourers, or even the majority of their leaders, had been men of cultivated intelligence, and tempers disciplined accordingly, this year would probably have stood in our history as the date of a vast social revolution wherein capital and labour would have been brought into deadly conflict, or into some new and wonderful agreement. But though these bodies of labourers understood some momentous truths, and set some noble objects before them —making sacrifices and arrangements for the education of their children, and the elevation of their own pursuits—

they were not yet instructed and disciplined enough for permanent concert, and, therefore, for success. The tailors of London broke away from their compact, and struck work without the sanction of bodies earning smaller wages than they; and these trades refused to support the tailors. Then, some office-bearers—chosen unwisely—absconded with money, and others mismanaged the funds: and from one cause or another, continued co-operation appeared to be impossible.

In the midst of this confusion, which would have presently settled the fate of the unions for a time, some events occurred, the gravity of which was then, and is now, but little understood by any but a few who did not tell what they knew, because it would not have been believed. Hitherto, the unions had been universally spoken of as those of trades; but now it appeared that the extremely poor, ignorant, and depressed agricultural labourers of the southern counties were banded together in unions, like the trades. It was the expression of that resistance to supposed tyranny which is the glory or the disgrace—the safeguard or the peril—of a state, according as it is enlightened by knowledge or darkened by passion. In this case, it was considered dangerous, and it was found to be inconvenient. These agricultural unions must be dissolved; and a method was used which brought after it endless mischief and shame. Six labouring-men were indicted at the spring assizes at Dorchester, not for any offence which they and others had ever thought of, but under an obsolete statute, enacted to meet the case of mutiny in the navy, and which made the administering of certain oaths a transportable offence. Ignorant as these men were, they knew that they were in fact charged with one offence and punished for another; and, rapidly as they were hurried out of the country, to undergo their sentence of seven years' transportation, they had time to become aware that public sympathy was with them. Public sympathy was with them, as with men punished by a stretch of law for a nominal offence, which did not repair the mischief of their example in that particular in which it was really wrong and dangerous. As for the unionists everywhere, they were exasperated: and they

declared that the time was now come for them to rise and overthrow the oppressors whose rule had hitherto disappointed their expectations, all the more bitterly for those expectations being in great part unreasonable.

By the unionists at large, it was agreed that a grand assemblage of all the trades should take place in or near London in April, to procure the recall of the Dorsetshire labourers. The day fixed on was the 21st of April, and the place Copenhagen Fields. This was all that the trades generally knew of the matter. Their leaders, however, agreed that the great unions could and should overawe the weak government of Lord Grey—now in its latter days—and obtain whatever they had set their minds upon. This was all that the leaders in general meditated; but there was a little knot of ferocious conspirators in the midst of them, who conducted a central movement, and resolved upon a violent seizure of the government, in the persons of the royal family and ministers. The trades were requested to carry their tools—those being specified which would best serve as weapons in the attack upon London. The 'glorious band,' as the handful of conspirators called themselves, were to carry arms. Accompanying the deputation to the Home Office, they were there to seize the minister at the moment of reception, dispose of everybody else in the office, let in coadjutors, seize the other offices, take the king and queen prisoners, secure the Bank and the Tower, and so forth. Lord Melbourne had graciously consented to receive the deputation on the 21st; and this would make the first step easy. He was declared to be 'done for.' But he received warning, and attended to it; and the Duke of Wellington made ready for the occasion with his usual quietness and promptitude. The great day was a Monday. On Sunday night, twenty-nine pieces of artillery were brought in from Woolwich, and placed in the neighbourhood of Whitehall, out of sight. Some light cannon were stationed on the roofs of the government offices, so as to command the streets. Large bodies of soldiery came into town during the night, and were kept ready for instant action, though under cover. The public offices were strongly guarded; the police stations were filled with their force well armed; the magistrates were

early at their posts: the park-gates were closed, and the citizens took the hints of the newspapers to stay at home; aides-de-camp were in the streets, in plain clothes, to reconnoitre; and five thousand householders were quickly sworn in as special constables at Guildhall. As for Lord Melbourne, he was not visible. The under-secretary, Mr. Phillips, received the deputation, and told them that a petition, however respectfully worded, could not be received by the minister when brought in such a manner, nor could Lord Melbourne grant an interview to a deputation so accompanied; that is, by a procession of 30,000 men. So the petition was placed on its car—a car all blue and crimson—and carried away, to be presented again in a quiet and orderly manner, by a small deputation, five days afterwards. The whole procession repaired to Kennington Common, where Mr Phillips's reply was repeated on various parts of the ground. There was no attempt to measure their strength against the Duke of Wellington, with his troops and cannon—no attack upon the palace, the Bank or the Tower. No soldiers were seen in the streets, and scarcely a policeman: when London was again asleep, the artillery and soldiery were conveyed away; and next day the great city was as if nothing had happened. The end of the matter, as regarded the Dorsetshire labourers, was, that public opinion bore so strongly upon their case, that a free pardon was sent out to them in Van Diemen's Land; and they returned in 1837, to be escorted through the streets of London, and past the government offices, by a procession of the trades as numerous as that which had petitioned in their favour in 1834.

On the retirement of Lords Grey and Althorp, the anxiety of the nation about who was to govern the country was less eager than might have been anticipated. The cause of the comparative indifference was, that a universal persuasion was abroad that any government that could be formed out of any party must be merely temporary. The feeling in favour of a liberal ministry was still too strong to permit any hope to the Conservatives; while the unpopularity of the Whigs, and the known apprehensions of the king about Church questions, rendered it improbable

that such a cabinet as the last would keep any firm grasp of power.

It was immediately understood that the king's desire was for a coalition ministry. But this was clearly impracticable. The commons would hear of no other leader on government questions than Lord Althorp; and they earnestly desired that he should be the head of the government. His station and character would have justified the appointment; and his unsurpassed popularity in parliament—a popularity which could not be fleeting, because it was grounded on fine qualities of mind and manners—would have been a strong point in favour of his administration. But he had not ability for such a position. He said so himself, and everybody knew it. His being premier was out of the question, but he was not to be parted with from office; and he gave up with a sigh the prospect of retirement to his country business and pleasures, received a pledge that the new Coercion Bill should be framed to meet his views, and became again chancellor of the exchequer. It was Lord Melbourne, and no one else, with whom the king consulted upon the reconstruction of the cabinet. Lord Melbourne becoming premier, his place at the Home Office was taken by Lord Duncannon—made a peer; and Sir J. C. Hobhouse took the woods and forests, with a seat in the cabinet.

The first act of the reconstituted government was to carry a new Coercion Bill, in which the clauses prohibitory of political meetings were omitted. The subject of the late intrigues and follies, by which Lord Grey had been removed from office, was not allowed to drop. Repeated demands were made for the production of the lord-lieutenant's correspondence; and the son of Lord Grey pressed Mr. Littleton with close questions as to who besides himself had been the correspondent of the lord-lieutenant. Mr. Littleton had suffered too much to be indiscreet again; he positively refused to answer; but it was not denied that there was another. In the Upper House the lord chancellor astonished his hearers by declaring his dissent from Lord Grey in regard to Mr. Littleton's act of communicating with Mr. O'Connell. 'He did not know how government could be carried on if certain leading men

were to be considered as tabooed and interdicted from all communication with the government.' When after making this declaration, he proceeded to avow that he had privately corresponded with the lord-lieutenant about the Coercion Bill, men felt that no answer was needed from Mr. Littleton to Lord Howick's pressing questions. 'He was also'—after mentioning Mr. Littleton's correspondence —'in the frequent habit of corresponding with the lord-lieutenant of Ireland. He had communicated with him on every subject interesting on this or the other side of the water.' The newspapers of the time pointed out the lord chancellor as the 'accomplice' of Mr. Littleton in writing the letter which changed the lord-lieutenant's opinion on the Coercion Bill, without the knowledge of the premier; and they further asked whether any cabinet could be safe with a member in it who could so perplex its councils. The experiment proved a short one.

The liberal party believed that it had gained by the changes in the cabinet; and a more frank and genial spirit of liberalism seemed to spread itself through the government after Lord Melbourne's entrance upon his new office. He was as yet little known in official life; but those who knew him best spoke well of him: he did not suffer under any lack of warning that much had been borne with from Lord Grey that would be fatal to the power of any one else; and the new premier took such warnings in good part. The session was nearly over—a session in which a vast amount of real business had been done, in the midst of all its mistakes and misadventures: the work of the government lay clear before it: and here was the recess just at hand, in which the measures of the next session might be prepared—for nobody dreamed of a change of ministry and of principles of government before the next session could begin. On the whole, Lord Melbourne's administration opened cheerfully; and the king's speech, on the 15th of August, was animated in its tone.

The autumn was variously occupied by the leaders of the parties and the destinies of the kingdom. Mr. O'Connell published a series of letters to the home secretary which could be of no service to any good cause from their violence of language, and in this case only aggravated the indis-

position of his Irish supporters to receive with a fair construction any measures offered by the imperial government. The 'Slaughter of Rathcormack,' which took place in November, and which was a prominent theme with O'Connell during the remainder of his life, might not perhaps have happened if he had not exhorted the people to impatience instead of patience, pending the trial of the government measures in regard to tithe. Some peasants who were opposing the collection of tithe, barred themselves into the yard of a cottage, as an escape from the military who were escorting the clergyman—Archdeacon Ryder—in his tithe-collecting excursion. The gate of the yard was forced, the soldiers fired, and thirteen men were killed, and eight wounded. Eleven of the thirteen were fathers of families. The widow paid her tithe, and the archdeacon 'proceeded to collect his tithes throughout the parish without further molestation.' He left behind him the people shutting their shops in the village, and driving every cow and pig out of sight for miles round; and bereaved fathers kneeling with clasped hands, to utter curses on the government, civil and ecclesiastical, which brought such desolation in the name of religion. O'Connell lost no time and spared no strength in exasperating the discontent, as if no healing measures had yet been entered upon.

Meantime, the lord chancellor was recreating himself, after a long stretch of arduous business, with a journey in Scotland; before the close of which some incidents occurred which deeply affected a part of the history of future years. He went from town to town, from one public reception to another, opening his mind to any hearers, on any subject; and thus the amount of egotism and indiscretion accumulated in ten days' time so as to fill the newspapers of the day, and fix universal attention. It was on this journey that he declared, at Inverness, that he should let his sovereign know by that night's post how loyal were his subjects in the north of Scotland; a promise which was found not to have been fulfilled. About such proceedings as these men might laugh and be amused; but a scene full of seriousness and significance, and pregnant with political results, took place at Edinburgh, which caused the shedding of many tears in private, and the

disappointment of much national hope at a subsequent time. Lord Grey was travelling northwards during this autumn—conveyed in a sort of triumph to his home, and beyond it, to Edinburgh, where a great banquet was given in his honour on the 15th of September. Among the members of his family who attended him was Lord Durham, at once the trusted friend of the old statesman and the beloved of the people. He was the principal framer of the Reform Bill, the consistent advocate of all genuine reforms—a man of the rarest honesty, which took the character of genius for the recognition of truth and right, and for the expression of it. When Lord Grey had earnestly desired his presence in the cabinet in the summer, he was kept out by the lord chancellor and another, and the Liberals in the Commons had expressed their sense of this act by an address to Lord Grey. Notwithstanding these circumstances, the lord chancellor appeared at the Grey banquet at Edinburgh; and nothing, as far as was known, had passed between the honoured guest of that banquet and himself, which need hinder his being present. He made a speech, the most prominent part of which consisted of rebuke to reformers who, in a fretful impatience, endangered all progress by rash attempts to go too fast. His language was so figurative that it is possible that he lost sight, in the pursuit of a succession of metaphors, of the substance of what he meant to convey, or of the impression which it would make on his hearers; but the great body of listeners—who were nearly three thousand—certainly understood him to desire a slackening pace of reform, and less pressure of popular will on the government; and it was in this understanding that Mr. Abercromby, Mr. Ellice, and Sir J. C. Hobhouse responded to the appeal of Lord Durham, and followed up his speech—the celebrated speech of that day—of which some words passed into a proverb, which sustained the heart and hope of the people at the time, but which, in the end, cost him his life, and set back the great work of colonial reform. The most memorable words of that speech, the words which were received at the moment with an enthusiasm that spread over the whole kingdom, were these: 'My noble and learned friend, Lord Brougham, has been pleased

to give some advice, which I have no doubt he deems very sound, to some classes of persons—I know none such—who evince too strong a desire to get rid of ancient abuses, and fretful impatience in awaiting the remedies of them. Now I frankly confess I am one of those persons who see with regret every hour which passes over the existence of recognised and unreformed abuses.' These words were received with cheers which seemed as if they would never end; and when single voices could be heard, one member of the government after another responded heartily, and said that it was good for public men to witness such scenes and hear such truths; it kept them up to their duty. Among these voices, however, the lord chancellor's was not heard. He sat mute—mute at the moment, but not elsewhere. He travelled fast, and was presently at Salisbury, making a speech of defiance against Lord Durham, in which he challenged him to a meeting in the House of Lords. In the number of the *Edinburgh Review* which appeared immediately afterwards, there was an article whose authorship was evident enough, and was never denied by either the editor or the presumed writer, which charged Lord Durham with having opposed a thorough reform of parliament in the cabinet, and with the gravest breach of trust—with revealing the secrets of the cabinet. By the Salisbury challenge this quarrel—interesting in itself, as between two eminent liberal leaders—was made a matter of public principle; and it was inevitable that Lord Durham should be regarded as the stanch reformer that he had ever shown himself to be, while Lord Brougham offered himself as the representative of the retarding or 'drag' system of government, as it was then called. Hence it was that those words of Lord Durham at the Grey banquet passed immediately into a proverb, and were taken as a text for political discourses, and were seen on banners, and as mottoes to newspapers and tracts. Hence it was, too, that the vindication of Lord Durham's honour became a public concern. It is probable that no one ever doubted his honour; but such a charge as that of betraying cabinet secrets must be met—difficult as it was to do so without a betrayal of cabinet secrets in the act of defence. The thing was done, and

well done, at a banquet given to Lord Durham at Glasgow, on the 29th of October. He there read a letter from Lord Grey which settled the question. Lord Grey declared his opinion that it was impossible for Lord Durham to reveal, for his own justification, anything that had passed in the cabinet; but he offered his own unqualified testimony to Lord Durham's fidelity to his public professions and his official duty. This testimony of the prime minister was enough; and the past was settled. As for the future, there was to be first a passage of words in the House of Lords. To this men began to look forward eagerly. They saw no further, and little dreamed what consequences of this hostility lay hid in the future. And, as a few days proved, they could not see so far as even the opening of the session. 'He has been pleased,' said Lord Durham, of his antagonist, 'to challenge me to meet him in the House of Lords. I know well the meaning of the taunt. He is aware of his infinite superiority over me in one respect; and so am I. He is a practised orator, and a powerful debater. I am not. I speak but seldom in parliament, and always with reluctance in an assembly where I meet with no sympathy from an unwilling majority. He knows full well the advantage which he has over me; and he knows, too, that in any attack which he may make on me in the House of Lords, he will be warmly and cordially supported by them. With all these manifold advantages, almost overwhelming, I fear him not, and I will meet him there, if it be unfortunately necessary to repeat what he was pleased to term my "criticisms."' Thus did the ground appear to be prepared for a new assertion of the people's cause, in regard to the reforms remaining to be achieved: but before the time came, the king had interposed—Lord Brougham had taken leave of office, and the Conservative party was in power. The king, it was understood, did not look forward with any satisfaction to the proposed controversy in the House of Lords; and his mind had long been uneasy about the treatment of the Irish Church by the Whig ministry. He seized the occasion of the death of Lord Spencer—by which Lord Althorp was raised to the peerage—to dismiss his ministers, and seek for satisfaction to his mind from the opposite party.

The surprise to the ministers themselves appears to have been great. All that had happened was that Lord Althorp could no longer be chancellor of the exchequer, from his removal to the Upper House. But Lord Melbourne had an immediate resource in Lord John Russell. He went down to Brighton on the 13th, and remained there till the Friday evening, when he returned to town, to tell his colleagues that the king had sent for the Duke of Wellington. Whether he had anything more to tell—whether he understood any secret causes of a change so sudden—or whether he agreed with the general belief as to the king's apprehensions and dislikes, there is no saying. The one fact of the case avowed by Lord Melbourne was, that he was taken by surprise—the cordiality of the king towards himself having never been interrupted.

The event occasioned a prodigious sensation, abroad as well as at home. French politics were forgotten at Paris; and on the quays of New York, New Orleans, and Boston, men stood in groups to read the papers or discuss the news. Here was an experiment of a recurrence to principles of government which had been solemnly, and with much sacrifice on every hand, disavowed by the British nation. The most interesting spectacle to the world now was of the success or failure of the experiment. Those who looked at the weakness and faults of the Whig administrations of the last four years believed it would succeed. Those who looked deeper—into the mind, so lately declared, of the English people—knew that it would fail. But the suspense was exciting and painful—more exciting and painful than people could believe a year afterwards; for it was not long before the Whigs were in again, with Lord Melbourne at their head, but not with Lord Brougham on the woolsack. Lord Brougham now finally left office, after having held the great seal four years. He did not, however, acquiesce at the moment in the relinquishment of all office. The Duke of Wellington could not fill up all the appointments for some time, as Sir Robert Peel's presence was indispensable, and Sir Robert Peel was at Rome; but the lord chancellor must clearly be Lord Lyndhurst, and he was appointed at once—on the 21st of November. Lord Brougham immediately wrote to

him, to offer to take, without salary, the office of chief-baron, actually held by Lord Lyndhurst. The application did not succeed. Lord Lyndhurst could say nothing till the return of Sir Robert Peel; and before that return, Lord Brougham had withdrawn his request. The public voice on this act was not to be mistaken. Lord Brougham pleaded that his intention was to save £12,000 a year to the country and to spare suitors the evils of a double appeal; but this last object, of the abolition of the vice-chancellorship, he had not pursued during the four years when the power of chancery reform was in his hands; and as for the saving of salary, the general feeling was that it would have been no compensation for the evil of the 'political immorality' of taking office under the Conservatives, in a manner which indicated confidence in their remaining in power. Lord Brougham therefore withdrew his application; but not before the act had affected his political reputation in foreign countries, where all preceding inconsistencies had been allowed for, or unrecognised.

In reviewing his four years of office, the most agreeable point to dwell upon is his activity in his function, and in the cause of law reform. In the summer of 1830, he had brought forward a bill for the establishment of courts of local jurisdiction in certain districts, intended to apply afterwards to the whole of the kingdom. By this measure it was hoped that justice would be rendered cheap and easy of attainment in a number of cases where it could not be had by multitudes, unless brought near their doors. As soon as he was in office—in December 1830—Lord Brougham brought forward this measure in the House of Peers, where it was laid on the table for consideration, being, as Lord Lyndhurst testified, an affair of the very highest importance—one consideration being that it would create fifty new courts, with fifty new judges and their establishments. To the great grief of its author, and of all who intelligently wished that justice should be accessible to every citizen, this, which was called, both lightly and seriously, the Poor Man's Bill, was thrown out by the Lords on the 9th of July 1833. The rejection of the measure was believed to be owing to the fear that it would draw away

too much business from the higher courts, impose too much expense, and yield too much patronage. In the session of 1833, Lord Brougham brought in a bill, which was passed by the Commons on the 22nd of August, for abolishing thirteen offices in the Court of Chancery, and reducing others, effecting altogether a saving of about £70,000. Lord Eldon did not think he should be able to persuade himself to go down to parliament again—he had, as God knew, too little strength to spend on an attendance utterly hopeless; and it weighed him down more than he could endure, to observe what was going on there, and how. This was written while waiting upon the progress of this bill, 'vindicating his own conduct' the while, and objecting 'to the haste' with which parliament was abolishing thirteen sinecures which had flourished under his own eye. Alas! there was other haste to object to—in the chancellor's judicial function. The clearance of business that he effected in the Court of Chancery was such as to make his predecessor feel as if the 'iron mace,' that Sydney Smith spoke of, were swinging about his ears. 'For twenty-five long years,' said Sydney Smith, just after the coming in of the Grey ministry, 'did Lord Eldon sit in that court, surrounded with misery and sorrow, which he never held up a finger to alleviate. The widow and the orphan cried to him, as vainly as the town-crier cries when he offers a small reward for a full purse; the bankrupt of the court became the lunatic of the court; estates mouldered away, and mansions fell down; but the fees came in, and all was well. But in an instant the iron mace of Brougham shivered to atoms this house of fraud and of delay.' And it is true that from that hour we have heard no more of the delays in the Court of Chancery being ruinous to property, as well as trying to the patience. It is true, also, that there was at the time, and has been since, much impugning of the quality of the judgments which were dispensed so industriously and so promptly. However this may be—whatever might be true about Lord Brougham's qualifications for such a post of judicial decision—there can be no question of the benefit to the country, after so long a rule of Lord Eldon's, of the clearance which was made by Lord Brougham. At

another period, the quality of the judge's law must be the first consideration: then, and for once, there was something more important—that racked minds should be eased, and unsettled minds certified; that a vast amount of deteriorating property should be restored to use and good management; and that the reproach of the highest court of the realm—the reproach of being a bottomless pit of perdition—should cease. In Lord Brougham's farewell to the court, on the 21st of November, he said, after lamenting the compulsion which obliged him to give up the seals in haste: 'I have the greatest satisfaction in reflecting that this court, represented by its enemies as the temple of discord, delay, and expense, has been twice closed within the space of five months.' He went on to ascribe the merit of this to the vice-chancellor and late master of the rolls, and also to the bar; but these functionaries all existed in Lord Eldon's days, and did not save the court from its reproach. Lord Brougham was himself the spring of their activity, as Lord Eldon had been the check upon it; and Lord Brougham was doubtless entitled to the satisfaction he naturally expressed on this parting occasion. As for the rest, it is not necessary here to enter into the controversy between himself and his contemporaries as to the share he had in promoting some good measures and defeating others. 'I should be only fatiguing you,' he wrote to Mr. Bulwer, 'were I to name the other measures of large and uncompromising reform with which my name is connected.' There were, indeed, many popular interests in former years with which his name was connected; and it should not, and will not, be forgotten, amidst speculations on his short official career, that in early and unpromising days, the most conspicuous advocate of political reforms, and of education, and the most effectual denouncer of negro slavery, and of tyranny in every form, was the Henry Brougham who, in 1834, was sighing for that position among commoners in which he had won his fame. At public meetings in London, and latterly in Scotland, he earnestly put forward his regrets that he had ever quitted the scene of his triumphs, the House of Commons, and his longing to 'undo the patent' of his nobility; and there were many who lamented that he

should ever have left the ranks of opposition. Such now hailed his retirement from office, and the clear indications of circumstances that the retirement was final; for they had a lingering expectation that, though in another House, he might resume his old habits, and be again the hope of the oppressed, and a terror to tyranny in high places.

Lord Althorp, now become Lord Spencer, was thus soon at liberty to enter upon the privacy he sighed for. He never returned to office. Perhaps no man ever left the House of Commons and an official seat about whom there was so little difference of opinion among all parties. Nobody supposed him an able statesman; and nobody failed to recognise his candour, his love of justice, his simplicity of heart, and his kindliness and dignity of temper and manners.

CHAPTER XIII.

Affairs of France—the Duke of Orleans—The Charter—Louis Philippe accepts the Crown—Disquiet—Suicide of the Duke de Bourbon—Disturbance in Paris—Constitution of the Chambers—Abolition of Hereditary Peerage—Electoral Law—Parties—Press Prosecutions—Insurrections—Fortification of Paris—Characteristics of the Reign—Death of Lafayette—Separation of Belgium and Holland—Prince Leopold King of Belgium—Brunswick—Saxony—Hesse Cassel—Baden—Switzerland—Italy—Spain—Death of the King—Don Carlos—Portugal—Death of Don Pedro—Marriage of the Queen—Her Widowhood—Egypt and Turkey—Poland—Revolt—Defeat of the Poles—Character of the Struggle.

The affairs of France during this period were only less interesting to the English than their own; and the proceedings of England were commented on by French statesmen of every party from day to day. English Conservatives found cause for apprehension, during the whole struggle for reform, that we were proceeding *pari passu* with the revolutionists of France; and English Liberals watched with interest whether it was so, while French affairs were undecided. The eyes of the world were fixed upon Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, from the moment

when he accepted the office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, before Charles X. and the Dauphin sent in their abdication, and set forth for exile. This Louis Philippe, whose father had died on the scaffold in the first revolution, who had known the depths of poverty, and been long lost in obscurity, was now at the head of the French nation; and it was a spectacle of eager interest how he would conduct himself there. He had walked, almost barefooted, over the Alps, and had taught mathematics in a school in Switzerland. He had lived humbly on the banks of the Thames; he had been a modest resident in Philadelphia, where he had fallen in love with a lady whose father refused his addresses as a match too inferior for his daughter; and he was now the centre of order in France, and the hope of all who craved the continuance of monarchy, and also of those who desired a safe and firm republic. The abdication of the king was placed in his hands at eleven o'clock of the night of the 2nd of August; and the next day he opened the session of the chambers, which met punctually according to the order of the late king, given some months before.

His speech declared his disinclination to his present prominent position, but his willingness, as that position was assigned him by the will of the nation, to accept all its consequences—all the consequences of a free government. He pointed out to the chambers the subjects which it was necessary for them to consider first; and especially the fourteenth article of the charter, of which the late ministers had availed themselves to assume that the king had a power beyond the law, when a crisis should render the observance of the law incompatible with regal rule. While delivering this speech, he stood on the platform covered with crimson velvet, strewn over with golden *fleurs-de-lis*, and with the tricolored flag waving over his head. It was observed that he left the royal chair vacant, and took the lower seat on the right of the throne, while his second son took that on the left. His duchess and her daughters were present in a gallery provided for the purpose; and every one remarked the expression of mournful gravity in the countenance of the anxious wife—the expression which has marked that countenance to this day.

The chambers were not satisfied with considering the fourteenth article of the charter. There was much besides which must be changed; for what was needed now was not the charter with a new executive, but one declaratory of such new principles as would be a better safeguard than the last had been. The preamble, for instance, declared the charter to be a gift from the king to his people; and if this had ever been true, it was not so now. The whole must be revised. It was revised; and never, perhaps, had a work of so much importance been done so rapidly. The venerable Lafayette, commander-in-chief of the National Guard, kept watch over the deputies to prevent their being disturbed. Vast crowds outside shouted day and night for their various objects, and especially for the abolition of the hereditary peerage; but Lafayette stood between them and the legislature, and permitted no disturbing influences to penetrate to the chamber of deliberation. On the night of the 6th, the whole was prepared. The throne was declared, by the new preamble, vacant by the forfeiture of the whole elder branch of the Bourbons. By alterations in the charter, all Christian denominations of religion were ordained to be supported by the state; and in the following December, the Jewish religion was added. The censorship of the press was abolished for ever. The king was declared to have no power to suspend the laws, or to dispense with their execution. No foreign troops were to be taken into the service of the state without an express law. The age of eligibility to the chamber was fixed at thirty. These were the alterations; and the charter, thus amended, was placed under the protection of the National Guard and the citizens of the empire. By a special provision, the peerages conferred by the late king were annulled, and the question of a hereditary peerage was reserved for consideration in the session of 1831. Two peers degraded by this special provision were immediately reinstated—Marshal Soult and Admiral Duperre. Several peers recorded their protest against this act of the Lower Chamber which concerned them; and the whole peerage question stood over to the next session.

There was not, perhaps, a more anxious mind in France than that of Lafayette between the 3rd and the 9th of

August. He was a republican, and he could now have established a republic; but whether France, as a whole, desired it, and whether the French people were fit for it, he could not decide; and the necessity of making a decision was an occasion of great anguish to him. He afterwards believed that he had decided wrong in offering the throne to Louis Philippe; and he never again knew what it was to have an easy mind. His last words, spoken from his pillow, were: 'He is a knave; and we are the victims of his knavery'—'C'est un fourbe; et nous sommes les victimes de sa fourberie.' It was on the night of the 6th of August, as we have seen, that the deputies finished their work. Whether Lafayette hoped or feared delay in the Upper Chamber, there was none. On the 7th, the peers passed the measure—only ten being dissentient on any part but that relating to their own order. The old royalist Chateaubriand objected to the throne being declared vacant while the infant son of the Duke de Berri lived; but these were no times for a child to occupy the throne; and the exclusion of the whole of the elder branch of the Bourbons was a point on which the nation at large was determined. Lafayette's time for deliberation was past. On the 9th he had to assist in offering the constitution and the crown to Louis Philippe.

The time was so short as to place the foreign ambassadors in great difficulty. They could not receive instructions from home; and at the ceremony, while every other part of the chamber of Deputies was crowded, their gallery contained only ladies and a few attachés. The golden fleurs-de-lis had disappeared from the drapery about the throne, and four large tricolored flags were disposed behind it. Instead of the anointing of the sovereign, there was to be the solemnity of swearing to the charter. Ninety peers were present: and those absent were the seventy-six of the creation of the late king, and those who had protested against the new charter. The royalist deputies were all absent. At the opening of the business, the duke was seated on a chair in front of the throne, his head covered, and his sons standing on either hand. While thus seated, he asked that the declaration of the 7th of August, as agreed to by the peers, should be

read, and then delivered to him, and then said, addressing the peers and the deputies: 'I have read with great attention the declaration of the Chamber of Deputies, and the act of agreement of the Chamber of Peers. I have weighed and meditated all their expressions. I accept, without restriction or reserve, the clauses and engagements which this declaration contains, and the title of King of the French which it confers upon me; and I am ready to swear to their observance.' Here he rose, and received in his left hand the form of the oath. The whole assembly rose, in solemn emotion; and the new king, baring his head, and raising his right hand, pronounced the oath in a firm, clear, and solemn voice: 'In the presence of God, I swear to observe faithfully the constitutional charter, with the modifications expressed in the declaration; to govern only through the laws, and according to the laws; to cause good and exact justice to be rendered to every one according to his right, and to act in all things with a single view to the interest, the happiness, and the glory of the French nation.' The diversity of the cries which composed the acclamation that followed was remarked by all, and derided by some who said that the very legislature did not know what to call the new king they had been in such a hurry to make. 'Long live the king!'—'Long live Philippe the Seventh!'—'Long live Philippe the First!' were the cries, which, however, soon mingled in one great shout of 'Long live the King of the French!' Others thought it a good symbol of the absorption of ancient territorial regalities in the chieftainship of a people.

The man has lived long; the king not so long. There was a picture of this ceremonial—of Louis Philippe swearing to the charter—which men thought would remain through many ages as a historical record of a great new era in the history of France. Men thought that their posterity in distant centuries would look upon the central figure of that picture—the bared head, the raised hand, the lettered parchment—and would regard them as the insignia of a new and lofty chieftainship, under which liberty and peace should be established in France. But already that picture has been torn from its frame in the royal palace, and carried out to be draggled in the dust, and cut to shreds.

The act which it represented had rottenness in it; and one characteristic of the time which had set in was, as indeed it is of all times since the dark ages, that nothing abides that is not sound and true.

Four marshals of France now brought the Crown and sceptre, and other insignia of royalty, with which they invested the new king. As he returned with his family to the Palais Royal, escorted by the National Guard, the multitude extended to the remotest points within view; and, of that sea of heads, all eyes were fixed upon the citizen-king. At the same moment, the displaced family were taking their way, neglected and forlorn, to the coast —the very peasants on the road scarcely looking up at them as they passed.

For a while—a very little while—all looked gay and bright about the new royal family—except the countenance of the mournful queen. She and her daughters visited in the hospitals the wounded of the days of July. The king invited to his table members of the deputations which came to congratulate him on his courage in accepting the crown. Sometimes there were officers of the National Guard, sometimes students from the colleges, sometimes municipal dignitaries from the provinces, sitting down to dinner with the king and his many children, like a large family-party. These children were idolised. Together with caricatures of the exiled family were handed about prints of the Orleans group, each member of which was made beautiful, noble, or graceful. All this was very natural. A fearful oppression had been removed; the revolution had been nobly conducted, and now there was a bright new hope to gladden many hearts. But under all this there were the elements of future trouble; and distress was already existing to a fearful extent. The pains and penalties of revolution were upon the people, and amidst all the rejoicing, there was stagnation of trade, depression of commercial credit, and hunger among the operative classes. Higher in society, there was a beginning of that conflict between the parties of movement and resistance which is a necessary consequence of political convulsion. Before the end of the year, two administrations had been in power; the first

containing originally but one member of the movement party, but being presently rendered a coalition government; and the second being perpetually in collision with the Chamber of Deputies. The executive was kept in continual anxiety by seditious movements which took place, in capital or country, at short intervals. The royal family, besides its share in all these interests, had to endure a great shock in the suicide of the Duke de Bourbon, the last of the Condés. He had been one of the Bourbon exiles, and retained the prejudices of his party; and whether his suicide was owing to his grief at the revolution, or to domestic miseries, it was most painful to the family of the new king, to one of whose sons he bequeathed the greater part of his wealth, under domestic influences of a dishonourable character. Thus, amidst much gloom and apprehension, closed the year of the revolution, leaving much to be done and endured during the next.

In February, a most alarming disturbance took place in Paris, which ended in the sacking of a church, and the destruction of the Archbishop's palace. The anniversary of the assassination of the Duke de Berri was kept by a religious service, notwithstanding a warning from the Archbishop of Paris of the danger of such an appeal to political passions. Some one fastened a print of the little Duke de Bourdeaux on the drapery of the funeral-car in the church, and placed over it a crown of everlastings. The crown was pulled to pieces by royalists who were anxious to wear its blossoms next their hearts. Murmurs spread, and the excitement was presently such as to call for the clearance of the church by the National Guard. But the people outside turned their indignation against the priest and the archbishop who might have prevented this royalist scandal; and the mob rose against the church and the palace, and destroyed also the archbishop's country-house. One consequence of this riot was that the fleur-de-lis now disappeared altogether. It had been twined round the crosses in the churches and elsewhere, to symbolise the union of devotion and loyalty; and now it was found that if they were not separated, the cross would be made to share the fate of the 'flowers of kings.' The

government charged itself with stripping the crosses of their lilies; the seal of state was altered, and the fleur-de-lis was proscribed thus soon after those who had worn it. Before the year was out, the chambers had decreed the perpetual banishment of the elder branch of the Bourbons, and the sale of all their effects within six months. The same measure was dealt out to the family of Napoleon.

As for the other measures of the parliament, the most important regarded the constitution of the two chambers. The hereditary peerage was abolished: and the power of the king to nominate peers was restricted within certain defined classes of persons, under declared conditions of fortune and length of service. It is difficult to see what remained after this to make a peerage desirable—at least, without a change of name. To sit in an Upper House, and be graced by the sovereign, might be an honour; but it is one altogether apart from all former ideas of peerage. It was easy to carry this bill through the Chamber of Deputies; but what was to be done next? There was no doubt of a majority in the Upper House against the abolition of the hereditary principle. It was necessary to create peers for the occasion; and there was a creation of thirty-six. The liberals were as angry as the peers at this proceeding, which they considered illegal and tyrannical. The plea of the government was the singular nature of the emergency. The peers showed their wrath in sullen silence; the liberals in clamour. During the whole proceeding, scarcely a sound was heard in the Upper Chamber. The voting was conducted, as nearly as possible, as it would have been in an assembly of the dumb. The majority by which the hereditary peerage was abolished in France was thirty-three. One touching incident which followed upon this act was that thirteen peers sent in to the president of their chamber, a week or two afterwards, their abdication of their rank and privileges. In their letters they assigned as their reason the abolition of the hereditary principle. The president received the letters, but refused to read them aloud. In considering the conduct of the British House of Lords with regard to the Reform Bill, it should be borne in mind what was passing in France. When there was a

threat of a large creation of peers to carry the bill, it was by a natural association of ideas that British noblemen, seeing what was doing at Paris, apprehended the abolition of their hereditary dignities, and looked upon their eldest sons as too likely to become commoners, while the family titles and honours would either expire, or be given to some stranger, as the reward of public service, to pass at his death to some other stranger. That such were the apprehensions of some nobles at home, while the thing was actually done in France, there can be no doubt; nor ought there to be much wonder.

The new electoral law, the French Reform Bill, was the most important subject of all that had occurred since the days of July. The number of electors to the Chamber of Deputies had hitherto been about 94,000 for the whole kingdom; and their qualification had consisted in the payment of yearly taxes to the amount of 300 francs (£12). The ministers proposed to double the number, taking the electors from the largest tax-payers. The project was not approved; and, after much debate, the bill that was carried provided a constituency somewhat exceeding 200,000, in a population of 30,000,000; the qualification being lowered to the payment of £9 per annum in taxes. That a constituency so small should have satisfied a people who had achieved a revolution for the sake of it, indicates that the principle of a representative system of government was little understood as yet in France. There was one, however, who understood it but too well; and that was the king. He now sanctioned the law: and from this first year of his reign to its last day, he was employed in virtually narrowing the constituency, and extending his own power over it by means of patronage, till, in the imminent peril that the representation would become as mere a mockery as in the time of his predecessor, his strong hand of power was snatched away from the institution which he had grasped for his own purposes. In 1831, however, he accepted the new electoral law, and congratulated his people on the enlargement of their representative rights.

Nothing in the record of this period is more interesting to us now than to read the declarations on the principles of

the politics of the day made by two men, conspicuous in that and in a later revolution—the king and M. Guizot. M. Guizot was a member of the king's first administration, and of his last. We find on record the opinions of both, in this first year of the revolution, on the character of the two great parties—of the movement and of resistance. On the opening of the new chamber in July of this year, M. Guizot declared himself to be, where it was the business of the government to be, between these two parties. After declaring that the resistance—the conservative—party would be gradually won upon by the blessings of good government, he said to the chamber: 'The other is the party that you have to deal with. That party, which I will not call the republican, but the bad revolutionary party, weakened and exhausted, is, at this time, thank God, incapable of repentance and amendment. The revolution of July is all that there was good, sound, and national in our first revolution; and the whole converted into a government. This is the struggle which you have to maintain, between the revolution of July—that is, between all that is good, sound, and national, from 1789 to 1830; and the bad revolutionary party—that is, the rump of our first revolution, or, all that there was of bad, unsound, and anti-national, from 1789 to 1830. The king, in a speech in answer to a provincial address, in the early part of the year, had given his view of this matter, in terms familiar at this day to all who have ears: 'We endeavour to preserve the just medium (*juste milieu*), equally distant from the excesses of popular power on the one hand, and the abuses of royal power on the other.' This phrase, *un juste milieu*, thus creditable in its origin, became discredited by subsequent events. It was from this moment indissolubly associated with the policy of the king and his cabinet; and it presently came to share their disgraces. After having for years heard it used as the nickname of a tampering and hypocritical despotism, it is interesting to revert to the origin of this familiar term.

From this time a cursory view of the politics of France presents little but a painful spectacle of a disguised conflict between the king and his people. In 1832, the king began his prosecutions of the press, which were carried on for the rest of his reign to such an extent as makes the

historical reader wonder that they were endured so long as they were. It was not only that newspapers were watched over and punished for their political articles, but that paragraphs in ridicule or censure of the king himself were laid hold of, and the authors subjected to cruel imprisonment. It required no small courage to brave such hatred as the king incurred when, for a libel against himself, he snatched a young man from his bride and his home, and shut him up for a term of years—the victim fainting three times while his head was shaved on his entering his prison after sentence. When such punishments were inflicted by tens, by fifties, the king could not expect to be beloved, even by those to whom the name of public order was most sacred. And he showed no sign of a desire to be beloved, but only to preserve order by the means which seemed to him best. The excuse of his libellers was, that he merged his function of king in that of minister; that he did not reign, but govern; and that he had therefore no right to complain of the same amount of criticism and comment which would be put up with by any one of his ministers. He chose, however, to be both minister and king, and he compelled others, as well as himself, to take the consequences. Within three years of the accession of Louis Philippe, the number of prosecutions of the press on the part of the government was 411. Out of this number there were 143 condemnations. This was not exactly the method of government that the nation had hoped to obtain by their revolution; but they bore with more than could previously have been expected. They were weary of changes and tumults, and thankful to be spared the expense and burden of war. In the hope that the resources of the country would improve under a peace policy, like that of Louis Philippe, the great middle classes of France were willing to bear with much, in order to gain time, and wait for natural change. The discontents of the injured therefore showed themselves in acts without concert—in attacks on the king's life, and libels against his character: and in occasional insurrections. Among the most formidable of these were two in 1832—one in Paris, on occasion of the funeral of General Lamarque, and supposed to be the work of the republican party: and the other in La

Vendée, for the purpose of restoring the old branch of the Bourbons in the person of the Duc de Bourdeaux, whose mother conducted the insurrection. During the revolt in Paris, the capital was declared in a state of siege; on the legality of which there were endless discussions afterwards —hurtful to the influence of the government. The provincial insurrection was put down, and the Duchess de Berri taken prisoner. The affair ended in a manner most mortifying to the exiled family, and ludicrous in all other eyes. The devoted mother, the widow of the murdered prince, the pathetic symbol in her own person of the woes of the banished line, gave birth to an infant in prison, and was thereby compelled to avow a private marriage in Italy. Everybody laughed at this proof of a divided devotion, and the heroine was allowed on her recovery to go where she would. She did not go to Holyrood, to meet the reproaches of the sufferers whom she had made ridiculous.

It was after these revolts that the vigilant among French patriots observed with uneasiness the stealthy progress of measures for fortifying Paris. Strong works were rising in commanding positions round the capital; and when inquiry was made, the name of Napoleon was put forth by Marshal Soult. Napoleon had resolved to fortify Paris, and had fixed on these very positions. But then, it was answered, that was during the hundred days, when he had reason to apprehend attacks from all the world. France was not now in apparent danger of invasion from any quarter; and the vigilant intimated their suspicion that these fortifications were intended to be held, not for, but against Paris. In 1833 the minister required from the chamber, when he brought in his budget, a grant of 2,000,000 francs (above £83,000) for carrying on the works. The deputies protested against a series of detached forts, and demanded that, if there were any fortifications at all, they should be in the form of circuit-walls, which might be manned, against a foreign enemy, by the National Guard or the citizens. The government held to its right to fortify the towns of the kingdom in its own way, without being called to account about the method; and the chamber refused the amount by a large majority. The works, however, proceeded; the vigilance of the

citizens increased; there was reason to apprehend a forcible demolition of these works—raised by invisible funds; and at length the workmen were dismissed, and all was quiet for a time.

In the affairs of government, however, there was no quiet. There were several changes of ministry during the year 1834; more suppression of journals and political societies; more riots in Paris and Lyon; and at one time, some danger of a war with the United States, about a money-claim which France at last hastened to satisfy, to avoid war. The king made more and more advances towards being the sole ruler of the country, with mere servants under him in the name of ministers. The substantial middle class grew more and more afraid of disturbance, the longer they enjoyed the blessings of external order. They escaped the qualms of a consciousness of their having bartered freedom for quiet, by endeavouring, as much as possible, to avoid the whole subject of politics. Those who felt the despotism, in their consciences, intellects, and affections, became disheartened under this apathy and contentedness of the middle classes, and stirred less and less under the incubus. It was no wonder that the king himself, and large classes of his people, and almost all foreigners, believed that his system was completely succeeding; that he had found out the way to govern the French; and that his reign would be memorable in history as the close of a long period of disturbance—memorable for its strengthening success from the beginning onwards, and for its peaceful close. Yet there were men in England at that date—sensible and moderate men—who said that Louis Philippe might possibly, though not probably, die a king; but that, if he did, he would be the last; and that no son of his would ever be King of the French. At the close of this period, however, he seems himself to have been satisfied with his progress, and sincerely believing that he was doing what was best for the people under his care. By a rapid and perpetual extension of functionarism—by planting officials all over the country to do the work of central departments seated in Paris—he was casting a net over France, by means of which he could draw the representation into his own

hands, and govern with ever-improving unity of plan—still and always for the nation's own good. Thus it seems to have been with France at the close of 1834.

In the course of this year, a silent censor was removed—a witness of old times whose presence was a perpetual rebuke to a citizen-king engaged in fortifying Paris. Lafayette died in May, and was laid in the ground without commotion—owing partly to the strong force of soldiery sent to the spot on the pretext of military honours to the deceased, and partly to the timidity and apathy which had grown on the middle classes. A vast multitude, orderly and silent, attended the funeral; and there was no discourse at the grave. It was left to other countries to pronounce his funeral discourse; and it was done, as by one impulse, by all whom he had assisted to political freedom, from the western boundaries of America to the depths of Germany. The reputation of Lafayette, both in its nature and extent, is as striking a tribute to virtue as can be furnished by any age. In him were collected all virtues but those which require high intellectual power for their development; and he was at least as much adored as any such idols of the time as had more intellectual power and less virtue. It was a misfortune to the world that his magnanimity had not as much of strength as it had of purity; for he was repeatedly placed in those critical positions when an individual will, put forth at a moment's warning, decides the destiny of a nation. On such occasions he showed himself weak; and through the same irresolution, such services as he rendered to his country were of a somewhat desultory nature, and seldom fully successful. But the love in which he was held showed that, for once, a man was estimated by the true rule—by what he was, and not by what he did. He could not achieve great enterprises; but he could meet danger anywhere, endure loathsome imprisonment at Olmütz, protest against wrong in the French Convention, fight under Washington for American independence, decline the headship of the republic in France, in order to put the crown on the head of Louis Philippe; and when he found that he had therein committed an error, retire to his farm, to end his life in humility and silence. He could pass

through a life of seventy-six years without showing a sign of selfish ambition, or any other kind of cupidity. He traversed a purgatory of human passions without a singe from any flame, or a single flutter of fear in his heart; the angel of compassion walking with him as his guard in that furnace. His goodness so clothes his whole image to men's eyes, that they forget his rank, and do not inquire for his talents; and in our age and state of society, this is the strongest possible testimony to the nobleness of his character. Lafayette was born of a noble family in Auvergne, in 1757, and early married a lady of rank equal to his own. He died, in his seventy-seventh year, on the 20th of May 1834.

At the very first revolutionary stir in Europe, Belgium began to move. The arbitrary union of Holland and Belgium had never answered; and Belgium was now bent on its being dissolved. There was no power of compulsion existing which could enforce a longer union against the will of a nation, however small, which was unanimous in a desire to live by itself, and after its own manner; so, after much marching and counter-marching of the Prince of Orange and his troops, and the rising of an insurgent army, and messages from the king, and consultations of the states-general, and a grand concluding bombardment of Antwerp, which called in the allies to interfere, the independence of Belgium was declared at Brussels, in November 1830; a monarchical government was decided on, and a vote of exclusion passed against the House of Orange. The Dutch people showed no particular reluctance to the separation; and there was therefore nothing to be done but to give up Antwerp to the Belgians, and leave them to settle their own affairs. It is somewhat amusing at this day to the English traveller to hear at Rotterdam the carping statement of Dutch merchants, and to witness their eagerness to disparage the trade of Antwerp; and at Antwerp to see the efforts made to exhibit its small commerce to the best advantage. It is, on a large scale, the spectacle of a village shop-partnership dissolved in a quarrel, where each party keeps a watch over his neighbour's custom, and is sure he cannot live by it, while neither wishes that the two concerns

should come together again. The rest of the world hopes that there may be business enough for both; and in the separation of Holland and Belgium, both had the good wishes of England. The Dutch heir-apparent had been educated by an English archbishop, and had been a suitor for the hand of the Princess Charlotte—a suitor refused only by herself, and not from any ill-will in other quarters; and the prince finally chosen by the Belgians to be their new king was the husband of the Princess Charlotte, and the uncle of the presumptive heiress of the British throne. Thus was England in amity with both countries when Prince Leopold became King of the Belgians. There was trouble for some time afterwards, from the difficulty that was naturally found in bringing the Dutch government to acquiesce in the new arrangements, and from some fear that France and England might have to sustain the cause of Belgium against Holland, supported by the other allied powers. It was by French arms at last that the citadel of Antwerp was compelled to evacuate its Dutch garrison. France was by this time closely united to the interests of Belgium. The King of the French refused the sovereignty for his son, the Duke de Nemours, to whom it was offered at the beginning of the struggle; but he gave his eldest daughter to share the throne of Belgium with Leopold, the marriage taking place in the autumn of 1832.

It was in the autumn of 1830 that the little duchy of Brunswick threw off the annoyance of its turbulent young ruler. By advice of the British and other sovereigns, the brother of the absconding duke assumed his place and government, according to the invitation of his subjects.—In Saxony, the cry for various reforms was so strong that the king, an indolent devotee, associated his nephew with him in the government, as joint-regent, the young man's father, Duke Maximilian, passing over in his favour his own right of succession to the throne. Duke Frederick Augustus thus became the virtual ruler of Saxony.—In Hesse Cassel, the people were up, demanding and obtaining a constitution.—There was a dispute about the succession at Baden.—In Switzerland, the governments of the respective cantons, threatened by the stir within and beyond their country, hastened to propitiate popular feeling by a

reform of abuses, and amelioration of institutions, and a grant of stronger guarantees of liberty.—In the next year there were insurrections in several of the Italian states;, but the troops of Austria marched down, presently restored order, and precluded all ameliorations in the government.—In Spain, the king died in 1833, of apoplexy, occasioned by over-eating. His little daughter, then three years old, was declared queen, under the regency of her mother, that Christina of whom France and England have since had occasion to know so much. These two governments were the first to acknowledge the young Queen of Spain. The other governments of Europe kept aloof till it could be seen what would become of Don Carlos, the pretender, who had now been driven from the soil of Spain, and had taken refuge in Portugal. This pretender was, for a course of years after this, of some consequence to England; for he served as a last refuge for the sympathies and hopes of the extreme Tories, when disappointed of all that they desired and hoped at home. It is necessary for such sympathies, and for that royalist imagination which has in it much that is venerable and beautiful, to have some object on which to exercise themselves; and the world is seldom without some fugitive prince, devoutly persuaded of his own right to some throne, who leads brave men with him, and is cheered on by romantic admirers from afar. There were now no more Stuarts; and Don Miguel, of Portugal, was too bad even for romance to advocate; but here was Don Carlos of Spain, whose case actually bore a dispute, who had lived among mountain fastnesses, and was now in exile, but likely to return; and here was the Whig administration espousing without hesitation, and in conjunction with revolutionary France, the cause of the infant queen, and hastening to acknowledge her sovereignty. It was no wonder that a peer here and there, and a few rich commoners, seeing all going to wreck at home in the passage of the Reform Bill, retired to their estates, and there studied the map of Spain, and thence wrote to the Spanish pretender accounts of the progress of revolution in England, and offers of sympathy, service, and hospitality, in case of need.—In Portugal, Don Pedro conducted the

war against his guilty brother in person—amidst much hardship and many reverses, till, in 1834, having been assisted by British ships and a Spanish army, he drove the usurper from the peninsula, assembled the cortes, was appointed to the regency on the 28th of August, and died on the 22nd of September. Two days before his death, the queen was declared of age by a decree of the cortes, who feared to commit the powers of government to any other hand. Some steps had been already taken in regard to her marriage, and on the 1st of December she married the Duke de Leuchtenberg, the son of Eugene Beauharnois, and already a family connection by marriage. The union seemed to promise well, as far as the character of the young man was concerned; but it was presently dissolved. The marriage had taken place by proxy; the prince arrived in Portugal in February, and in March died of sore throat occasioned by cold.

These events in the west of Europe were interesting; but less so than what was going on in the east. The Pacha of Egypt was acquiring the possessions of Turkey almost as fast as his forces could march over them. Under the command of his adopted son and avowed heir, Ibrahim Pacha, his army had taken possession of the whole of Syria—perhaps not much to the discontent of the Syrians themselves—and by the end of 1832 the Egyptian general had passed the Taurus, on his way to Constantinople. The abasement of Turkey was extreme. It was this Egyptian vassal whose aid had supported her in her struggle with the three powers; and now, what could she do but appeal to Russia for assistance against her own vassal? The next year, she did so appeal, to the great annoyance of France and England, whose object was to keep Turkey out of the grasp of Russia. Mohammed Ali was remonstrated with; and he showed great moderation in the midst of some anger. He had made war only when the Porte had interfered with what he considered his right to conduct a quarrel of his own with a brother-vassal—the governor of Acre. He made no difficulty about stopping the march of his army; but, before Ibrahim turned back, he had obtained from the Porte all that he chose to demand. Early in the summer of 1833, Moham-

med Ali found himself master of all the provinces from the borders of Asia Minor to the unknown retreats of the infant Nile; and he had himself learned, and had shown the world, how easy it was to march upon Constantinople, and knock at the doors of the sultan's seraglio. It was of his own free pleasure that Ibrahim turned back now. He was soon seen in every part of the Syria he had won for his father, taking barbarous vengeance on his enemies, when so inclined; but, at the same time, building hospitals, repairing mosques, promoting agriculture, taking an interest in manufactures, and everywhere securing, with the whole force of his authority, toleration and good treatment of the Christians.

Russia had answered promptly and gladly to the appeal of the Porte for protection; but she had some engrossing affairs on her hands elsewhere. It was during the revolutionary autumn of 1830—that season of political earthquake—that the oppressions of the Russian Grand-duke Constantine at Warsaw became so intolerable, that it may be questioned whether they would not have produced the same results, whether the rest of Europe were on the stir or in a dead sleep. Some students of the military school had drunk to the memory of Kosciuszko and other heroes. The grand-duke caused two successive commissions to sit on this offence; and the decision being, in each case, that there was no ground for punishment, the grand-duke took the affair into his own hands, and, without warrant of law, ordered some of the youths to be flogged and others imprisoned. The young men rose; the Polish part of the garrison joined them; and then the townspeople began to act. They helped themselves with arms from the arsenal, and aided in driving out the Russian soldiery, amidst fearful bloodshed, from the streets of Warsaw. It was on the 29th of November that the students rose; and on the 3rd of December, Constantine was travelling towards the frontier, having recommended all establishments, persons, and property, to the protection of the Polish nation.

In this short interval, six Polish nobles had taken the place of some obnoxious members in the administrative council, and had presented to the grand-duke their pro-

positions for various reforms, and their demand for the fulfilment of the constitution. Everything was still done in the name of the emperor. When Constantine set out on his journey home, it was thought at Warsaw so doubtful how the emperor would receive the tidings of what had happened, that it would be as well to provide for defence, if he should be very angry. The Poles did not yet know Nicholas, and the character and power of his wrath. The day was coming when fierce torture of the heart and mind was to show what it was. It was nothing uncommon to be forming and exercising a force, as the Poles now were. They were a military people, and their organisation had been kept up by Russia. The worst feature in their case was the absence of any port. They had no command of the sea, either for the arrival of aid, or for facility of escape. At the close of the year their prospect was an anxious one. If Russia should be incensed, Prussia and Austria would join her to put down the nuisance of Poland. But the die was cast. News must soon arrive. Meantime, the commander-in-chief, Klopicki, was made dictator, in case of its being necessary to prosecute the rebellion. It was necessary. The first news from St. Petersburg was, that the emperor promised to inflict signal vengeance for the 'horrid treason' of the Poles.

And the emperor kept his word. At the beginning of the year 1831, his wrath was announced to the Polish nation; and at the beginning of February, his armies began to pass over the frontier. When it had become clear that Poland must declare for independence, the dictatorship had been exchanged for a council of state, consisting of a few of the most eminent patriots. Before the end of the year, all was over; the constitution of Poland was withdrawn; she was declared 'an integral part of Russia:' her nobles were on the way to Siberia; her high-born ladies were delivered over for wives to the common soldiers on the frontier; her tenderly reared infants were carried away in waggon-loads to be made Russians, and trained to worship the czar. Polish law was abolished; the Polish language was prohibited; and the emperor uttered his declaration to listening Europe: 'Order reigns in Warsaw.'

The spectacle of the conflict had been one of intense interest to the world outside. The struggle had been a brave, an able, and, under the circumstances, a long one; and there were times when the most anxious observers had some hope that the Poles might succeed. The word 'hope' may be used here without reserve, because the sympathy was almost all on one side. The highest conservatives might and did sympathise with the Polish rebels; for there were no higher conservatives in the world than these Polish rebels themselves. If their deep-rooted conservatism, their intensely aristocratic spirit, had been understood by the liberals of Europe and America from the beginning, there would perhaps have been less sympathy in their efforts, and certainly less hope of their success. It was not till long afterwards that the discovery was made that the Poles had been fighting—for nationality, it is true—but not for national freedom; that they had not the remotest idea of giving any liberty to the middle and lower classes of their people; and that they carried their proud oligarchical spirit with them into the mines of Siberia, the drawing-rooms of London and Paris, and the retreats of the Mississippi valley. This is not mentioned as a matter of censure, but of plain fact, which it is necessary to know, in order to the understanding of their case. They strove for all that they understood; and they did, for he rescue of their nationality, all that bravery and devotedness could do. To contend for popular freedom was another kind of enterprise, of which they had no conception, and for not understanding which, therefore, they cannot be blamed. But it is to this inability that their utter destruction is now, at last, seen or believed to be owing. They themselves impute their latter disasters to dissensions among themselves; and there were dissensions enough to account for any degree of failure. But it also seems clear that their cause was doomed from the beginning, from the absence of any basis of popular sympathy. The great masses were indifferent, or rather disposed in favour of Russian than of Polish rule. They did not know that they should be better off under a change, and they might be worse; so they let the armies pass their

fields, and scarcely looked up as they went by. No cause could prospor under such a dead weight as this. This view, now generally taken, is borne out by the impressions left by the exiles in the countries where they have taken refuge. Everywhere, all homes, all hearts, all purses, have been open to them—for hard and narrow must be the hearts and homes that would not welcome and receive strangers so cruelly afflicted, and so insufferably oppressed; and everywhere the impression left seems to be the same—that the Poles undertook an enterprise for which they were not morally prepared. They could sacrifice their lives and fortunes; and they could fight bravely and most skilfully for any cause to which they would give the lustre of their arms. But something more than these things, fine as they are, is required to entitle men to the honour of the last contention for nationality: an humble industry must be united to the magnanimous courage of the battle-field; aristocratic pride must be laid down when its insignia are thrown into the common cause; and the most intense hatred of tyranny is an insufficient qualification, if it be not accompanied by an answering enthusiasm for human liberties wherever there are human hearts to be ennobled by the aspiration. Many of the Polish exiles have caught something of this enthusiasm in the countries over which they have been scattered by their revolution; but it does not appear to have been the moving force of their struggle for nationality in 1831.

CHAPTER XIV.

Royalty in England—The Coronation of William IV.—The Princess Victoria—Assault on the King—Popular Ignorance—Riots—Anatomy Bill—Medical Education—Criminal Trials—Steam in the East—Conveyance of Mails—Diving to Wrecks—The Drummond Light—Polar Discovery—Islington Cattle Market—Peterborough Cathedral—New London Bridge—Education—British Association Meetings—Statistics of Suicide—Duelling—Loss of the *Rothesay Castle*—Fire at the Dublin Custom-house—Burning of Houses of Parliament—Necrology—Political Deaths—Men of Science—Seamen and Travellers — Actors—Musicians — Architects — Antiquarians — Artists — Authors—Philanthropists.

The accession of William IV. was really enjoyed by his people, as affording exercise to their loyal feelings, and giving them the opportunity so dear to Englishmen of talking about royal doings, and obtaining an occasional glimpse of regality itself. Through the illness of George III. and the morbid fancies of his successor, royalty had for many years lived so retired as to be known only in its burdens and its perplexities. Now it came forth again, not only on Windsor Terrace, but into the very streets, and sometimes on foot—with friendly face and cordial manners. Amusing stories— amusing to most people, but shocking to Lord Eldon—were soon abroad of the curious liberties taken by forward and zealous people, in their delight at finding themselves not afraid of royalty. On one of the first occasions of their majesties' going to the theatres in tate, there was an exhibition of placards in gallery and pit, evidently by concert—placards bearing the words 'Reform' and 'Glorious King.' At a word from a policeman, the placards were withdrawn; but here was a 'revolutionary symptom' for the timid to exercise their apprehensions upon. The coronation, which took place on the 8th of September 1831, was a quiet affair, befitting the accession of a sovereign who was humbly and reasonably aware that his reign must be short, and undistinguished by any energetic personal action. There was no banquet, and the royal procession returned through the streets at

three o'clock. The king and his ministers gave great dinners at home, and London was illuminated in the evening. There was one person present in all minds, who was absent from the ceremony—she who was, in all probability, to fill the principal place at the next. It was given out that the state of the Princess Victoria's health made it desirable that she should remain in retirement in the Isle of Wight; and perhaps it was best, considering her tender age, and her peculiar position, that she should. She was only twelve years old; and, if certain authorities are to be trusted, had only within a year become fully aware that a regal destiny was before her.

It was now time that overt preparation for that destiny should be made, if it was to be done, as it ought to be done, gradually. In the next year, we see her beginning a series of tours, wherein were embraced all the good objects of health, of her becoming acquainted with the principal institutions, monuments, and scenes of the country of which she was to be sovereign, and of her being inured to move in public. In 1831, the journey comprehended the singular old city of Chester, several cathedrals, some noblemen's seats, where the royal party were entertained, and ending with the University of Oxford. During these tours, the young princess, who at home was wont to walk out in thick shoes and a warm cloak, in all weathers, on a common or through fields and lanes, was familiarised with the gaze of a multitude, and with processions, addresses, and observances, such as she must hereafter be accustomed to for her whole life. The management was good; and we may suppose the recreation was pleasant, for it has been kept up. Of all royal recreations, there can be none more unquestionably good than that of an annual tour. If there is more dulness and constraint, and less intellectual freedom and stir, in royal life than in any other, this is a natural safeguard and remedy, as far as it goes. A large accession of ideas must accrue from annual travel; and there is no other method by which the distance between sovereign and people can be so much and so naturally diminished as by the sovereign going forth from the palace among universities, and towns, and villages, and scattered dwellers on wild heaths and the sea-shore. To those that

hope that the practice and its pleasures may be renewed for many, many years, it is interesting to mark its formal beginning, in the autumn of 1832.

Amidst all the alarms talked about by the anti-reformers during the 'revolutionary period' under our notice, there was less danger and even disrespect to majesty than has been common in much quieter times. It was impossible for a sovereign to incur the consequences of a change of mind about a course of policy to which he stood pledged without suffering more or less; but William IV. was gently dealt with, considering the circumstances. The utmost suspicion could not make out that his life was in danger from political discontents; and on the two occasions when his life was threatened, the ill-conditioned wretches who threw the stone and wrote the letter gave their private wrongs and wants as their excuse. On the first occasion, a depraved old pensioner, five times turned out of Greenwich Hospital for misconduct, thought he 'would have a shy at the king,' and put stones in his pocket for the purpose. At the first 'shy,' he struck the king on the forehead, as his majesty was looking out of the window at Ascot races. But that he wore his hat, the king might have been seriously hurt. As it was he was somewhat stunned, but presented himself again at the window before there was time for alarm. Though this happened at so critical a season as June 1832, it was impossible for the most ingenious alarmist to connect it with politics.

There is little in this period to yield comfort as to the state of popular enlightenment. The proceedings of the Dorsetshire labourers were marked by an astonishing barbarism. In introducing agricultural labourers into their union, they used death's heads, and hobgoblin mysteries, the very mention of which carries back the imagination five hundred years.—During the years 1831 and 1832, we find records of enclosure riots, of a formidable kind. In one place, the poor people fancied that fencing in boggy land was against the law altogether; and in another, that the law expired in twenty-one years from the first inclosure in 1808; and in both these instances, the levelling of fences went on, night after night, till nothing was left; and the soldiers were pelted, and ex-

asperated proprietors were wounded, and a world of mischief done, because the poor people knew no better than to suppose they were struggling for their rights.—Then we have more combination horrors—more ferocity towards capitalists, and tyranny over operatives, exercised by a very few worthless meddlers, who feasted on the earnings of the honest but unenlightened men whom they made their tools. We find the leaders of strikes cutting pieces out of the looms, and thrashing and stabbing men who were content with their wages, and only anxious to be left free to maintain their families by their own industry.—One of the most formidable riots of the time took place on the day appointed for a general fast, on account of the cholera—the 21st of March 1832. An ignorant and violent association, which called itself the Political Union of the Working-classes, and which subsisted for only a short time, failing in all its aims, raised a fearful mob-power by offering to feed the hungry with bread and meat, in Finsbury Square, instead of observing the fast. Alarmed at their prospect when it was too late, they failed to appear; and no bread and meat were forthcoming. It is said that the assemblage of the hungry that day—amidst a season of deep distress—was enough to appal the stoutest heart. The emaciated frames and haggard faces were sad to see; but far worse was the wrath in their eyes at the mockery, as they conceived it, of an order to fast to avert the cholera, when here were above 20,000 poor creatures in danger of cholera from fasting and other evils of destitution. As their wrath and their hunger increased, and the women among them grew excited, conflicts with the police began; and before the multitude were dispersed to their wretched lurking-places, more hungry than they came, there had been some severe fighting. More than twenty of the police were wounded, and many of the crowd.—The incitements to rick-burning, machine-breaking, and seizure of corn, addressed to the agricultural population in 1831 by Carlile and Cobbett, were so gross as would not have been dreamed of in any country where the barbarous ignorance of the rural labourers might not be confidently reckoned on. Whether it was wise in the government to prosecute these two

profligate writers, affording thereby an effectual advertisement of their sedition, may be a question; but the trials stand out as an exposition of the popular barbarism, and the low demagogism of the time.—The murders for the sake of selling bodies for dissection did not cease after the retribution on Burke and Hare, but rather increased—as it is usual for fantastic or ferocious crimes to do, while the public mind is strongly excited about them. The disappearance and proved murder of Italian boys and other homeless and defenceless beings was hastening the day when the law should be so altered as to permit anatomy to find its own resources in a legal and recognised manner; and the settlement of the matter was further accelerated by an incident which fixed a good deal of attention in 1832. A woman who knew herself to be likely to die, and believed that her disease was an unusual one, desired her brother to deliver over her corpse to a public hospital, and to spend in charity what her funeral would have cost. The brother obeyed the directions. As it appeared that the law rendered interment necessary, the remains were buried from the hospital. The brother was brought before the Hatton Garden magistrate under a vague notion of his having done something shocking and illegal. On a full hearing on a subsequent day, it appeared that he and the officers of the hospital were entirely blameless; the magistrate closing the business by informing the prisoner 'that he had not violated the laws of the country, but, on the other hand, had acted in strict accordance with them.' As far as the public were concerned, the sister's memory was not left without its share of admiring gratitude. In the next session, Mr. Warburton introduced and carried a bill, by which the provision for the dissection of bodies of murderers was repealed, and the association of disgrace with dissection thereby extinguished; and by which facilities were offered for anatomists to avail themselves of the wish or permission of dying persons and survivors, while abuse was excluded by a machinery of certificates and registration.

By this time the imperfect character of medical education was beginning to be seen and admitted; and in 1830, we find great improvements in course of introduction by the

Society of Apothecaries' Hall, and prescribed to students as regulations. In 1828, the student was not obliged to attend more than six courses of lectures; in 1829, it must be ten courses; in 1830, fourteen. There must be more hospital practice, and a more extended examination, before candidates could be admitted to the profession. The subject of medical qualification was kept painfully before the public mind, in this and two succeeding years, by the results of the quack-practice of a young man, once a portrait-painter, named St. John Long, who believed that he had discovered an infallible ointment, and method of treating the sores that it caused. While mourning over the ignorance of the populace, we must not lose sight of that of the educated classes, as they are called. Long's patients were of the moneyed classes—and his rooms were besieged by ladies and gentlemen who supposed that one particular ointment would cure all their various complaints: they adhered to their young doctor, in the face of all the deaths that were taking place under his treatment; and when he died in 1834, the 'secret' of his ointment was sold for several thousand pounds. In September 1830, an inquest was held on the body of a young lady who was one of the victims of his quackery; and in consequence of the verdict, Long was brought to trial, and convicted of manslaughter. Not the less for this do we find him, the next February, on his trial again for the death of a healthy person, who had applied to him on account of a slight and common ailment, and who died in torture under his treatment in a month's time. On this trial the fact came out that Long was making £12,000 a year. His plea in the present case was, the malice of his enemies, by which he was kept away from his patient in her last moments, when he should have recovered her. The jury, evidently not enlightened enough to see the ignorance shown in the principle of Long's practice, and naturally impressed by the array of gentry of 'the highest respectability,' who came forward to vindicate his qualifications, returned, after some delay, a verdict of Not Guilty: whereupon 'several elegantly dressed ladies went to the prisoner, and shook him cordially by the hand.' The young man, who may have believed in his own specific,

had only three years more in which to torture his patients and let their flatteries and their guineas flow in upon him; but the spirit of quackery did not die with him, nor the propensity to it in his admirers, the ignorant of the 'educated classes.' Just at the time when Long was laid in his grave, an innkeeper at York was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for manslaughter of an invalid, by administering the Morrison's Pills which have since sent so many to the churchyard before their time. The thing wanted evidently is such an advance of physiological and medical knowledge as shall exalt that knowledge into real science. While the best medical practice is yet but empirical, there will be unqualified as well as educated empirics; and portrait-painters and innkeepers, if they can but lay hold of a specific, may number their patients by thousands.

In the midst of the incendiarism of the Carliles and Cobbetts of the time, the popular respect for and trust in the law was enhanced by some incidents, otherwise purely painful, wherein justice was made to visit persons of 'property and standing,' as if they had had neither property nor standing. The never-ceasing and too just complaint, that the friendless and over-tempted are punished with hardness and indifference, while the well-friended and educated, whose intelligence aggravates their offences, are, somehow or other, almost always let off, had been prevalent, as usual, when Captain Moir—'William Moir, gentleman'—was tried in 1830 for the murder of a man whom he had shot for trespass, very wantonly, and after repeated threats of mischief to his victim. Captain Moir was hanged, as simply as his victim would have been if the act of aggression had been reversed. In the same year, a lady was convicted for shoplifting, who actually carried on her person, at the moment of the theft, the sum of £8000 in bank-notes and India bonds. She underwent her punishment. In this case, if insanity had existed, it must have been proved. All parties would have been too happy to admit the plea. It was no doubt one of those cases of strong propensity for which neither our education, law, nor justice makes provision. It is a case which makes the heart bleed; but if such are not allowed for among the

poor, who have so little advantage of discipline, they cannot be among the rich, whose sin is in outrage of all restraining influences. The wretched woman of wealth suffered as if she had been a hungry mother, snatching a loaf for famishing children at home. In the next year, a Scotch clergyman, 'minister of a Gothic chapel in Edinburgh, in high repute for his evangelical preaching,' was tried on an extensive indictment for book-stealing, found guilty of eleven acts of theft, and transported for fourteen years. To set against these acts of justice—in common phrase—were a few which went as far to weaken popular trust in the law as these to strengthen it. In a very gross case of shoplifting in the autumn of 1832, by 'two young ladies of high respectability,' there was such collusion as caused the escape of the culprits: the father was forewarned of the warrant, 'that he might not be taken by surprise;' and so much time was given, that the minds of all the prosecuting parties had changed, and no one would attempt to identify the thieves. Far worse, however, were two cases, which happened near together, of erroneous verdicts and hasty sentences—cases so gross as must have made all the poor in the neighbourhood believe that a criminal trial was a sort of lottery, as they had long concluded the punishment of transportation to be. A man was convicted at Salisbury of threatening a neighbour by letter with a fire on his farm; the judge telling him with severity, that his crime was certainly not mitigated by his denial after such evidence—'evidence which must satisfy every reasonable man'—and passing on him a sentence of transportation for life. Presently, the prisoner's son came forward, and owned himself the writer of the letter, of which his father had no knowledge whatever. As more letters had been sent to neighbours, the sentenced man was tried on another accusation, which enabled him to bring forward the new evidence of his innocence. He was 'pardoned,' as the insulting phrase is; and the son, a mere youth, transported for seven years. The other case occurred only a few weeks afterwards, and was a very serious one. A receiver of stolen goods was convicted of having stolen them by an act of burglary, and sentenced to death, from which he was saved only by great exertions.

It was the manifest insufficiency of the evidence which occasioned the efforts of those who saved him; and the whole affair was a disgrace. While such a transaction as this was stimulating the growing disapprobation of capital punishments, on the ground of the tremendous risk to the innocent which they involve, the worthy magistrates of Inverness were taking another ground, in an application to the lord advocate. They exhibited their case: that they had discharged their executioner; and that they would be subjected to very serious expense, if a man at present in custody on a charge of murder should be sentenced to be hanged. If this memorial had but been made sufficiently public at the time, who knows but that the abolition of capital punishments might have been much hastened by a general discharge of executioners?

A Chinese advertisement was translated and sent to England at this time which excited a good deal of attention. The steamer *King-fa*, running between Canton and a northern port, carried cows, a surgeon, a band of music, and had rooms elegantly fitted up for opium-smoking. It was now clear that the eastern seas were to become steam-highways; and it was time that the English were assuming the lead, in this as in other enterprises of world-wide interest. We find therefore trial made at Blackwall, in 1834, of an iron steam-boat, to be used as a towing-vessel on the Ganges; and in the same year, an application from the India merchants to government to establish a regular communication from Malta to Alexandria, in order to facilitate their correspondence with India. In the course of the negotiation, we find that a steamer or a man-of-war was sent from Bombay up the Red Sea 'about once a year;' and their lordships of the Admiralty could not think of going to any expense unless something more was done on the Bombay side. The face of things has changed in the Mediterranean and the eastern seas since that date.

A passion of admiration at the marvels and privileges of railway conveyance runs through the records of this period. We are told of the coaches superseded, of the number of passengers and weight of parcels carried—the speed, the ease, the safety; 'but one fatal accident in

eighteen months;' and of a railway opened between Leeds and Selby, in 1834. A singularly interesting passage is found, under the date 1832, in Mr. Babbage's *Economy of Machinery and Manufactures*, wherein we see shadowed forth in one suggestion two of the mightiest enterprises of our time. After indicating the vast increase which might be looked for in epistolary correspondence, if the time and cost of letter-carrying could be reduced, Mr. Babbage invites us to imagine a series of high pillars, erected at frequent intervals as nearly as possible in a straight line between two post-towns—a wire being carried from post to post, and so fixed as that it might be traversed by a tin cylinder which should carry the letters. The cylinder was to be moved by being attached to a smaller wire—an endless wire which would be wound round a drum by a man placed at each station. We have an anticipation of the convenience of two or three deliveries of letters per day in country-places; of the vast increase of correspondence that would ensue, from the lessening of the cost of conveyance, both in money and time; an exposure of the clumsiness of the then existing method of conveying the mails; and a conception, remarkably expressed, of a possibility of shooting thought through long spaces by wires stretched above the roadside. 'Nor is it impossible,' concludes Mr. Babbage, 'that the stretched wire might itself be available for a species of telegraphic communication yet more rapid.' This was a near approach to the machinery, though not glancing at the principle, of the electric telegraph; and it would at that time have startled even Mr. Babbage's alert imagination to have known that in fifteen years there would be established, in the broad territories of the United States, a means of communication so rapid as even to invert the order of time, to set at defiance the terrestrial conditions of space and duration; so that, by an electric telegraph between New York and Cincinnati, news is sent of an event which, happening at noon in the one place, is known at five minutes before noon at the other.

One use early made of the invention of waterproof cloth was for diving purposes. In 1832, some expert divers at Yarmouth, the crew of a small cutter there, discovered for

themselves, and to their great amazement, that they could carry enormous weights under water, almost without being sensible of them, and perform feats of what would be strength in an atmospheric medium, which they could themselves hardly believe. The diver went down in three dresses, the uppermost one being of India-rubber cloth, with a tube inserted at the back of the neck, through which air was pumped from above to meet the consumption by his lungs. The copper helmet he wore, with its three glass windows, pressed with a weight of 50 lbs. upon his shoulders; and he carried down in bags 120 lbs. of lead; yet he felt perfectly unencumbered as he walked under the green water, and leisurely surveyed the wreck which he had come to pillage. There he discovered that the large iron crow-bar which he took down with him—a tough instrument enough on board the cutter—could be bent by him, on board the wreck, till its ends met. By a set of signals he obtained what he wanted from his comrades overhead; and when they sent him down baskets, he returned them full of wine.—A diver at Portsmouth was, during the same summer, exploring the wreck of the *Boyne*, which had sunk thirty-seven years before. He was to deliver over the copper he found to the dockyard, and to keep everything else. One part of his treasure was wine—twenty-one bottles of port and claret, from the captain's store. As the bottles, crusted with large barnacles, came up from the deep where they had lain for thirty-seven years, persons were eager to purchase; but the owner refused twenty shillings a bottle, which was offered on deck. The Portsmouth diver wore a lighter dress than the Yarmouth crew. When his simple leather hood and Mackintosh dress were seen, men of enterprise began to think of walking round the coasts of our islands, under the waves, to measure the inequalities of the submarine hills and valleys, picking up, as they roved over hill and dale in the dim green light, the treasures of the wrecks which lie strewn there, from the days of Julius Cæsar to our own time.

Before these adventurers descended into the depths, a philosopher had been on certain heights of our islands, whence he had brought down a discovery which dazzled

men's eyes, both literally and metaphorically. Lieutenant Drummond has since been known and honoured in the world of politics; but when he became Lord Althorp's secretary, at the urgent desire of the whole cabinet, he said decidedly and repeatedly that his true vocation was the pursuit of physical science in connection with his profession, and that he should return to it after a certain term of service in political life. He did not live to return to the pursuit of science, but died worn out in devotedness to Ireland. Before accepting any political office, he was engaged in a trigonometrical survey in Ireland; and, being anxious to obtain as large a base for his triangle as possible, he pondered means of establishing signals between two distant mountain summits. This desire led him to the discovery and use of the brightest light at that time ever known—the Drummond-light, as it was then called. It was obtained by directing a stream of oxygen, and another of hydrogen, under certain conditions, upon lime. The doubt was whether steadiness and permanence could be insured. No time was lost, however, in attempting practical applications of it to purposes the most vast and the most minute. We find records of trials of new lenses with this light, by which the mariner's star, the beacon, would brighten to an ever-increasing magnitude; and of microscopic application of a light penetrating enough to show the whole interior organisation of a flea, and of animalcules of the ditch, which presented themselves as transparent monsters of the deep.

Captain Ross and his comrades returned from the North Pole, and landed at Hull in 1833. They had discovered the Gulf of Boothia, and the continent and isthmus of Boothia Felix, and many islands, rivers, and lakes. They brought home also a store of valuable observations, particularly on the magnet. What remained to be discovered in connection with the North-west Passage was now brought within such compass that no one doubted that a few years would witness the completion of the survey.

In the last month of 1833, we find an announcement of an enterprise of a spirited individual, named Perkins, who had expended £100,000 in erecting a cattle-market at Islington, covering 22 acres of ground, and ready to receive

4000 beasts, 40,000 sheep, and calves and pigs in proportion. The projector, and many other persons, were simple enough to believe that the nuisance of Smithfield Market would now be abated; that there would soon be an end of the danger to passengers in London streets from overdriven cattle; and of the pollution of the cattle-market in a crowded district; and of the inevitable cruelty used towards the animals in a space so crowded and inconvenient, and of the badness of the meat, in consequence of the suffering condition of the animals. All this had been true for many years; and it had been represented again and again, and with great urgency, to parliament; but the trustees of various trusts, the inhabitants of Smithfield, and the cattle-salesmen, had always hitherto been too strong to permit a change; and they have been so to this day. It should not be forgotten, however, that as early as 1833, an opportunity was afforded for abating the nuisance of Smithfield Market.

A new choir, of great beauty, was erected in Peterborough Cathedral during this period, and the church was made once more what it was before it was devastated by the Puritans. The expense was defrayed by a subscription within the diocese, and the work was superintended by the dean, Dr. Monk, who had become Bishop of Gloucester before it was finished.

The opening of the new London Bridge by their majesties in August of 1831 was kept as a holiday throughout London; and the occasion was truly a great one. This was a farewell to the old bridge, with its memories of a thousand years; and here was a far-surpassing work, which might carry on the mind to a thousand years more. Here it was, in its strength and grace, bestriding the flood with its five wide elliptical arches, without obstructing the stream; and here it was likely to stand, perhaps, till bridges should be wanted no more. The king was in an enthusiasm; so exhilarating did he find the grandeur of the scene and the beauty of the day. He told the gentlemen of the bridge committee, as he stepped out of his barge, that he was most happy to see them on London Bridge; that it was certainly a most beautiful edifice; and that the spectacle was in every way the grandest and the

most delightful that he ever had the pleasure to witness. It was towards the end of 1832 that the last stone of the last arch of old London Bridge dropped into the river; and as the circles on the water were effaced, a historical scroll of many centuries seemed to be closed for ever.

London University was by this time advancing to a condition to receive its charter; and King's College, London, was in a prosperous state, as to credit, funds, students, and the number of schools in London—now seven—in connection with it. A university being clearly wanted in the north of England, that of Durham was projected, and its plan made known in 1831.

In 1831 took place the first meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science—an institution of the time which, though not involving all the benefit which the sanguine expected from it at first, has yet been the occasion of too many advantages not to be noted in its origin. In a few years it became evident that while the less-qualified members of the scientific world were delighted to run to these meetings, with their notions and their self-importance, and their admiration of the eminent, many of the greatest found it inconvenient, and, from the throng of the idle and unscientific, even irksome to attend; and that a great deal of mere talk, and boast, and quackery, must be put up with; and especially that once a year was much too often for the convenience of real hard students to leave home for such meetings. But yet it was a noble thing for the wise in various departments of human knowledge to congregate and compare their discoveries and their views, and unite their efforts, and support one another's undertakings, and indicate to governments the scientific aims which it rests with the rulers of the globe to see fulfilled. At a later period it will fall in our way to note the influences and enterprises of this association. Here it is necessary only to record that its origin is referrible to this period.

A statement of suicides in Westminster was drawn up from official documents in 1833, from which some instructive results were obtained. It appeared that the number of men who destroyed themselves were nearly three to one in comparison with women; a fact which was accounted

for by another of great importance—that a very large proportion of suicides was occasioned by that state of the brain induced by intoxication. Some surprise was felt at the proof that the smallest number of suicides occurred in the month of November, which had hitherto borne the opprobrium of this kind of slaughter.—A sensible check was, from this time, given to the practice of duelling, by the disgust excited at a fatal duel between Sir John Jeffcott, chief-justice of Sierra Leone, and Dr. Hennis of Exeter. Sir J. Jeffcott had received his appointment and knighthood, and was on the eve of embarking for Africa, when some tattling took place at night, over brandy-and-water and cigars, which occasioned a challenge to Dr. Hennis. He denied the words imputed to him, but was called by his antagonist 'a calumniating scoundrel,' forced out to fight, in spite of strenuous efforts on the part of friends, and shot dead, at the moment before the departure of his antagonist. Sir J. Jeffcott was tried in his unavoidable absence, and acquitted, as gentlemen always are in duelling cases; but he was necessarily displaced from his judicial post. He was drowned a few months afterwards by the upsetting of a boat off the coast of Africa. The vulgar, brawling character of the whole transaction, and the force put upon Dr. Hennis, sickened a multitude with the barbarous character of the ordeal of the duel, who had before regarded it in the light of an older time.

Another transaction between two men, who had not even the ground of friendship for their generosity, deeply touched those hearts which felt most the horror of the Exeter duel. In no crisis of human life are men put more severely to the proof than in shipwreck. The most awful shipwreck of this period, or that which was most generally impressive, was that of the *Rothesay Castle*, in August 1831. The *Rothesay Castle* was a battered, leaky old steamer, which plied between Liverpool and Beaumaris; and at this time she had a captain who appears to have been unworthy of the command of any vessel. He started in rough weather, and silenced the remonstrances of all on board who implored him to put into a port of safety. She drifted and went to pieces in the night, from the failure of the coal through her excessive leakage; and all her pleasure-

parties, her groups of tourists, her band of music, and her crew, were plunged into the deep at midnight. The captain denied that she was aground, when her cabins were filling with water—swore that there was no danger—hung out no lights—refused to fire a gun, though the lights of Beaumaris were visible in the distance—and was himself one of the first to perish. Only twenty-two persons were saved out of nearly a hundred and fifty who left Liverpool. Two men, strangers to each other, found themselves holding on to the same plank, which it soon appeared, could support only one. Each desired the other to hold on—the one, because his companion was old; the other, because his companion was young—and they quitted their grasp at the same moment. By extraordinary accidents both were saved, without the knowledge of either, and they met on shore in great surprise. Few greetings in the course of human life can be so sweet and moving as must have been that of these two heroes. Its contrast with that on the Exeter race-course shows like a glimpse into heaven and hell.

In the summer of 1833, a terrific fire consumed the bonded stores connected with the Dublin custom-house, and occasioned a vast destruction of property; though little in comparison with what might have been, if, as was for some time apprehended, the quays and the shipping had been involved in the conflagration, and if much valuable merchandise had not been stored in fire-proof vaults. The sugar-puncheons flared up like great torches in quick succession; the tallow sent columns of flame up into the night; while fiery floods of whisky rushed over the quay, pouring over the wall into the Liffey, which presented a sheet of blue flame over half its breadth, threatening the coal vessels that were drawn to the other side. The origin of the fire was never discovered; though large rewards were offered by government and the magistrates, from a suspicion of incendiarism. Men thought that they had now witnessed the most remarkable fire that would be seen in their generation; but they were mistaken; for in the next year, a conflagration occurred in which that of the Dublin custom-house stores was forgotten.

In course of centuries, the power of the Commons had

increased till their House had become a dignified spectacle in the eyes of the world; yet the members sat, a closely packed assembly of business-like men, in the old St. Stephen's Chapel—a dingy, contracted apartment, whose sides had been drawn in by wainscoting, to hide the pictures of the old Catholic times, and whose height was lessened by a floor above, and a ceiling below, the old ones. In such a chamber as this were the British Commons found by wondering strangers till the end of the year 1834. At that time, the tally-room of the exchequer was wanted for the temporary accommodation of the Court of Bankruptcy; and it was necessary to get rid of an accumulation of the old exchequer tallies—about two cart-loads in quantity. These tallies were used for firewood, but this method of clearance was too slow; and there had once been a bonfire of them in Tothill Fields. There was some talk, now of burning them in the open air; but the plan was given up, in the fear of alarming the neighbours. The burning was ordered to be done carefully and gradually in the stoves of the House of Lords; but the common workmen, to whom the business was intrusted, did it in rashness and hurry, nearly filling the furnaces, and creating a vast blaze, which overheated the flues. Many times in the course of that day—Thursday, October 16th—the housekeeper of the House of Lords sent to the men, to complain of the smoke and heat; but they believed in no danger. At four in the afternoon two strangers were admitted to view the House. At that time, the throne could not be seen from the bar; the visitors had to feel the tapestry, to know that it was tapestry—found the heat so stifling in one corner as to be led to examine the floor, when it appeared that the floor-cloth was 'sweating' underneath, and too hot to be borne by the hand. In answer to the surprise and doubts of the strangers, the housekeeper replied that the floor was stone; and that that corner was so hot that its occupants sometimes fainted on full nights. Within two hours after the perplexed strangers were gone, with their disappointed notions of the House of Lords, the mischief broke out. Flames burst from the windows of a neighbouring apartment, and the alarm was spread all over London. The ministers were presently on

the spot, and the king's sons, and such members of both Houses as were in town. Little could be done; and of that little, much was left undone from want of concert and discipline. Mr. Hume saved a portion of the library of the House of Commons; and many hands helped to throw out of the windows, and carry away, the papers of the law-courts. These law-courts were saved, at the expense of their roofs being stripped off, and the interior deluged with water. The most painful apprehension was for Westminster Hall: but engines were taken into the Hall, and kept at play so abundantly as to prevent any part being caught by the flames. Many valuable things were lost; and among others, the original death-warrant of Charles I., and the registration and qualification roll signed by members of the Commons after taking the oaths. The destruction comprehended the two Houses of Parliament, the Commons' Library, the Lords' Painted Chamber, many of the committee-rooms; the clerk's house, and part of the speaker's, with all the habitations between; the rooms of the Lord Chancellor, and other law-officers; and the kitchens and eating-rooms. The comments of the crowd on such occasions show something of the spirit of the time. Mr. Hume, who was busy before all eyes, seems to have been the butt of the night, from his perseverance, for a long time past, in endeavouring to obtain a better house for the Commons to meet in. In one place some gentlemen cried, 'Mr. Hume's motion carried without a division;' and in another, poor men were saying that Mr. Hume could never get over this; the fire was certainly not accidental; and everybody knew how he had said he would not bear the old House any longer, he was so uncomfortable in it. There was a shout about Lord Althorp's disrespect for the People's House when he was heard to cry out 'D—n the House of Commons! save, oh, save the Hall!'—which last words the French newspapers changed to 'the House of Lords;' thus showing what an anti-reformer he was at heart. The Climbing Boys' Act was unacceptable to the sweeps of London; and now one of them was in high glee because the 'hact' was destroyed, and, in the joy of his heart, set up, above all the roar, the cry of 'Sweep!'

There was nothing unseemly in this joking; for, really, the occasion could not possibly be considered a very melancholy one by those who were aware how seriously the public interests were injured by the unfitness of the parliament-houses for the transaction of business, and their hurtfulness to the health of members. 'Mr. Hume's motion was now carried without a division;' whereas, it would have been years, under ordinary circumstances, before any move would have been practically made towards a better housing of the legislature. The antiquarian interests concerned were not very strong—the relic most mourned at first, the tapestry of the Spanish Armada, was afterwards found; no lives were lost; no poor men were ruined; and, on the whole, the impression was that this compulsion to build new houses of parliament was not to be lamented.

In the morning, the king sent to offer Buckingham Palace for the use of the Legislature. Some suggested St. James's Palace; but it was determined to fit up rooms on the old sites as speedily as possible. On the whole, this was found the least expensive and most convenient plan. The House of Lords was to be made habitable for the Commons, and the Painted Chamber for the Lords, at an expense of £30,000; and not a day was lost in beginning the preparation for the next session. It was a week or more, however, before the fire was out. It smouldered among the coals in the vaults; and the play of the engines within the boarded avenues was heard, and puffs of steam were seen to ascend, till after the privy-council had closed their careful and protracted inquiry into the origin of the fire. This origin, as has been said, was decided to be rashness and carelessness in burning the exchequer tallies.

The last memorials, in the form of living witnesses, of the strong government at the latter part of the eighteenth century, were now slipping away. Thomas Hardy died in 1832, in very old age, and his comrade, John Thelwall, two years later. These men were made, by the passions of their time, the heroes of the liberal party. They invaded the convenience and composure of authorities and men in high places by an intemperate assertion of somewhat crude views of liberty and political aims; and the

authorities did something worse in invading the rights of these men, and of all other citizens in their persons, by endeavouring, by a harsh construction of law and facts, to convict them of high treason. The attempt was unsuccessful; and the men remained a sort of heroes, with a slight martyr-glory round their heads, as long as they lived. Their prosecution and acquittal, in company with Horne Tooke, were annually celebrated in London by a festival of the friends of civil and religious liberty, till the deaths of Hardy and Thelwall brought the observance to a natural close.—Another hero of the same period, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, died in 1834, in extreme old age. He escaped the penalties of high treason only by slipping out of prison, and putting off from the Irish coast in an open boat, in which he was long tossed about before he reached Brest. The charge against him was of treasonable correspondence with the French government. He was a gentleman of education and fortune; and in his old age, when time and change had mellowed his mind, his conversation and manners were full of charm. Forty years of a useful and benign life would have been wasted and foregone, if the gallows noose had caught him in that cruel season, when extreme men of all parties hated each other with a hatred far too unphilosophical and impolitic to beseem philanthropists and statesmen.

It was a day to be remembered by the whole Roman Catholic body in our islands, when a member of the body was, for the first time after their long depression, called to the rank of king's counsel. The first who was so called was the distinguished Charles Butler, author of a whole library of books, the dread of bishops and other clergy for his religious writings, and the supporter of O'Connell in claiming his seat in parliament for Clare without re-election. Mr. Butler was in his eightieth year at that time, and he lived three years longer.—An aged man died in the next year, 1833, who was not less beloved by the Catholics, and not less a friend to them, while himself a good Protestant—the venerable Earl Fitzwilliam, who, in the harsh times at the close of the last century, was recalled from Ireland after a viceroyalty of two months, on account of his countenance of the Catholic claims. On the day of

his departure from Dublin, all the shops were closed, and the inhabitants appeared in mourning. He was a member of the Grenville administration for a year before its fall; and his only public connection with politics afterwards was one as honourable to him as his Irish failure. He took part in a public meeting convened to discuss and rebuke the conduct of the Manchester Yeomanry in 1819; and for this he was dismissed from the lieutenancy of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Earl Fitzwilliam died in February 1833, in his eighty-fifth year.—He was soon followed, within a few months, by his old friend, Lord Grenville—another staunch champion of Catholic rights, and one who had a long course of years in which to advocate all causes that seemed to him good. Lord Grenville had been speaker of the Commons, and found himself secretary of state at thirty years of age; and this appeared nothing remarkable to him—his friend William Pitt having held place and power when ten years younger still. In our days, a politician of thirty is regarded as a youth of promise. But whenever a great political genius arises, it is probable that rules and customs about age, as about everything else, will give way. Lord Grenville reached the age of seventy-four, and died childless, so that the barony became extinct.—Another aged minister of state died in the same year—Earl Bathurst, who was esteemed by his party as a good man of business, and one of their soundest members.—Lord Spencer, who also died in the same year, aged seventy-six, had not been a stable politician; having entered life as a Whig, afterwards become a supporter of Mr. Pitt, holding office at the admiralty during the period of Nelson's victories, and going into power with Grenville and Fox, in 1806. His tastes were more literary than political, and he was the collector of the finest private library in England, the bulk of which was deposited in a suite of ground-floor rooms at Althorp, nearly 250 feet in length. The political influence of Lord Spencer's death was greater than that of his life, in his decease being the occasion of the dismissal of the Whig government, and the return of the Conservatives to power.

Another nobleman, who died in the same year, was more

fond of literature than of statesmanship; yet his name must have honourable mention among statesmen. Lord Teignmouth began life as John Shore, son of a plain country-gentleman. He entered the civil service of the India Company, and rose to the office of governor-general of India. Lord Cornwallis's settlement, and other great measures of that ruler, were mainly attributable to Lord Teignmouth. Yet his heart was more in literature than in statesmanship. He was the bosom-friend of Sir William Jones, whose life he wrote, and whose works he edited. In his old age he was the president of the Bible Society, and died in his eighty-third year.—Another statesman, who cared more for philosophy and literature than politics, was lost to the world in 1833, mourned by all with compassionate grief—Earl Dudley. He was only fifty-two, and his powers had died before him; for his brain gave way, after many threatenings and much suffering from a morbid temperament, two or three years before his death. He was an intimate of Horne Tooke, the friend of Canning, and a cabinet minister in 1827; a man of fine tastes and accomplishments, and of independent thought. After much repugnance, he had determined to support the Reform Bill, as a better alternative than withstanding the will of the nation; but when the time came, he was too ill to take his place in the legislature, and he never knew how the great question had issued.—Sir John Leach, master of the rolls, and a privy-councillor, died in 1834. He began his studies as an engineer; but a discerning friend perceived in time his aptitude for the legal profession, and induced him to follow it; and England thus obtained one of the best judges of modern times. His defence of the Duke of York, in 1809, obtained for him the good-will and confidence of the prince-regent; and his way was then clear to the eminence which he reached. He opposed the creation of the Vice-chancellor's Court; but yet became vice-chancellor after Sir Thomas Plomer, and master of the rolls after Sir J. Copley (now Lord Lyndhurst). His clearness of apprehension in the reception of evidence, and his decision of judgment in determining and delivering the results, were his most remarkable professional characteristics; and in private life he

won respect by a singular calmness and simplicity in the endurance of a long course of bodily suffering of great intensity. Most men would have died untimely under such pain as he endured; but his indomitable mind bore him up, and he reached the age of seventy-four.—The interest of the whole political world of Europe was engaged by one death which took place at this period. The young son of Napoleon, the Duke de Reichstadt, died at Vienna in 1832, at the age of twenty-one. The birth of the little King of Rome, as he was called in his cradle, had been regarded, in the short-sightedness of men, as a mighty event; and the eyes of the world were fixed upon the child. But before he was old enough to be conscious of human destiny, his rights were gone, his father was borne away over the sea, and he became a landless German prince, under the care of his grandfather, the Emperor of Austria. His attendants adored him for his personal qualities; and from a distance many hopes waited upon him; but he was withdrawn from any possible struggle for thrones and dominations by early sickness and death. By the age of sixteen he had outgrown his strength; and consumptive tendencies encroached upon him, till he sank thus in early manhood. As he lay in state in the palace, those who passed by the bier received the most affecting lesson of the time as to the deceitfulness of worldly hopes.

In science, one of the most interesting names of the times is that of Sir John Leslie, born of an humble farmer and miller in Fifeshire, who died professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. He was a sickly child, averse to books and lessons, but always delighting himself in calculations, and following out mathematical inquiries. This peculiarity fixed the attention of the parochial minister, and was the occasion of his being sent to St. Andrews, to study for the church. He and Ivory went to Edinburgh together, neither of them probably anticipating the eminence to which both were to raise themselves. Leslie was aware that the church was not his true destination; and he declined it, becoming tutor to a nephew of Adam Smith's, and to two of the Randolphs of Virginia, with whom he went to the United States. On his return, he intended to lecture on natural

philosophy, but found, to use his own words, that 'rational lectures would not succeed.' A disgraceful controversy took place between the magistrates and clergy of Edinburgh respecting his nomination to the mathematical chair in their university, in 1805; the clergy objecting to him on the ground of his having irreligiously declared Hume's *Theory of Causation* 'a model of clear and accurate reasoning.' The magistrates appointed Leslie, in disregard of the clerical opposition; and the clergy brought the affair before the General Assembly. After a discussion of two days, the assembly decided not to subordinate science and liberty of opinion to dogma propounded on an occasion of mere inference, and dismissed the appeal of the clerical objectors as 'vexatious.' Mr. Leslie filled that chair till he was called to succeed Playfair in the professorship of natural philosophy, which he held till his death, in November 1832. He invented or revived the differential thermometer, and aided science in many ways by a vigorous exercise of his bold inventive and conjectural faculty, which was more remarkable in him, mathematician as he was, than his powers of reasoning and research. His pupils complained of a want of simplicity in his style, and of clearness in his arrangement; while more advanced students believed that the difficulty lay also in his overrating the powers and experience of those to whom he addressed himself. The highest order of his hearers were continually charmed with the life and vigour of his views, and the rich illustration he cast over his scientific subjects from the stores of his general reading. His experimental processes were exquisite from their ingenuity and refinements. His last production is to be found prefixed to the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—a discourse on the history of mathematical and physical science during the eighteenth century. He died in his sixty-seventh year.

In the next year died a mathematician who put his science to a practical use which all could understand. William Morgan, who was for fifty-six years actuary to the Equitable Assurance Society, was a nephew of Dr. Price; and it was Dr. Price who withdrew him from the medical profession to which he was destined, and caused

him to be fitted to the function in which he did so much for the practical application of the science of probabilities, and for the elucidation of national finance. He published much that was useful; but it was as a standing authority always ready for reference, that he rendered his most important services; and all the while, the Equitable office was rising, under his management, from being a small society, with a capital of a few thousands, into an institution of national importance.

The hurricane at the Mauritius, in 1834, killed a man whose name is destined to live in connection with nautical science—Captain David Thompson—whose computation and production of the lunar and horary tables, and invention of the longitude scale, were emphatically acknowledged by the Board of Longitude. He did much to fence in with safety the broad highway of nations; and thus his services so lie on the verge between science and the arts as to lead us to consider him as a comrade of the great man who opened so many roads to us on the firm land, and whose engineering achievements come under the head of the arts.—Thomas Telford was president of the Society of Civil Engineers at the time of his death, which happened in the autumn of 1834, when he was seventy-seven years of age. Telford was a poet in his youth; and surely we may say that he was a poet in action in after-life; for where are lofty ideas and a stimulus to the imagination to be found, if not in such spectacles as the Menai Bridge, and the Caledonian Canal, and his great Welsh aqueduct, and St. Katherine's Docks, and the water communication that he made through the pine hills of Sweden, from the North Sea to the Baltic? It was thus that he regarded his works, and in this spirit that he wrought them; for he had the loftiness of mind, the bright integrity, and benign candour, which are the characteristics of genius that has found its element. There is hardly a county in England, Wales, or Scotland, which is not strewn with monuments of him, in the best form of monument—beneficent works. There is no day of any year in which thousands are not the better for the labours of this man.—Two years before his own death, Telford had been called to mourn that of a pupil and a friend whom

he had introduced into a career which promised success something like his own. Alexander Nimmo was, when very young, recommended by Telford to the parliamentary commissioners for fixing the boundaries of the Scottish counties; and again to the commissioners for reclaiming the Irish bogs. All round the coast of Ireland his works are found—harbours, docks, piers, and fishing stations; and his chart of the whole coast is held to be a guide of great value. He died at Dublin in 1832, aged forty-nine.

During the same period we lost Richard Hall Gower, the author of various improvements in naval architecture which were gradually, though slowly, brought into practice before his death in 1833; and Henry Bell, who, so early as the 2nd of August 1812, launched the first steam-vessel, called the *Comet*, on the Clyde; and the aged Lionel Lukin, who was the inventor of the safety boat. The Norway yawl, on which he first experimented, was bought by him with his earnings in his coach-building business in 1784; and his patent bears date the next year. Though his boat was established for the time by the approbation of Sir Sydney Smith, who found that it could be neither overset nor sunk, the invention of safety-boats was afterwards claimed by other parties, and Mr. Lukin was deprived of much of the honour and emolument which were his due. He contributed in other ways to the public safety and convenience, as by his raft for the rescue of persons carried under the ice, by a bedstead for invalids, and several improvements in the construction of carriages. He was ninety-two when he died, in 1834.—Some now living remember the introduction of the *Camellia japonica* into this country. We owe the luxury to Archibald Thomson, a kinsman of the poet of the *Seasons*, and chief gardener at the Marquis of Bute's estate in Bedfordshire. The superb *Magnolia Thomsonia* was raised from seed by Archibald Thomson; and he saw the plant reach a height of eighteen feet, and a circumference of twenty-four. Like most of the hardy and well-employed race of Scotch gardeners, he attained a great age, dying in his eighty-first year, in 1832.—The eccentric Abernethy died in 1831, after having made himself so talked about for his oddities as hardly to have justice done him for his important services.

He raised the reputation of English surgery all over Europe by indicating and performing an operation, in certain cases of aneurism, which was before supposed impracticable; and by its connection with him, St. Bartholomew's Hospital rose to be the first in London. Mr. Abernethy did not at all approve our following, in any degree, the ancient Egyptian practice of parting off the human body among dozens of classes of doctors—so that one was to have charge of the limbs, and another of the lungs, and another of the stomach, and others of the eye, the ear, the mouth, and so on. Mr. Abernethy did not like to hear of oculists and aurists, but insisted upon it that no man was fit to undertake the charge of any member without being fit for the charge of the whole, as no function of the frame is isolated. In this, the sense of society went with him; the only wonder being that, since the days of the old Egyptians, there should have been any doubt about it. Mr. Abernethy did not know where he was born, but only that his parents removed to London in his early infancy. He was sixty-six years old when he died.

Among the rovers of their time, we find two names of great interest in the list of the deaths of the period. Two midshipmen, it will be remembered, remained with the mutineers of the *Bounty*, in 1788, when the other officers were set adrift in an open boat on the Pacific. One of these midshipmen, Peter Heywood, died in 1831; and Mr. Purcell, who was one of those in the open boat, followed in 1834. Peter Heywood was only fifteen at the time of the mutiny; and before he was much older, he led a party of sixteen of the mutineers to settle in Otaheite, in order to meet the vessel which it was certain would be sent after them from England. The *Bounty* was given up to Christian and his eight comrades, who had no wish to stir from where they were, or to meet any English vessel. When the *Pandora* arrived in Otaheite, the two youths rowed out to her, and made themselves known, when they were put in irons, and treated with extreme rigour. After a most disastrous voyage home, young Heywood met his trial—showed that his case was one for pity rather than punishment—was found guilty, but freely pardoned by the king. He afterwards became an able and trusted

officer. One of his last services was with Lord Exmouth in the Mediterranean, in 1815 and 1816.—And Lord Exmouth died soon after him—in February 1833. As Lord Exmouth lay on his painful death-bed, we may hope it cheered him to think of the Christian captives whom he had released from their Algerine slavery. He reached his seventy-sixth year.—Captain Sir Murray Maxwell, who commanded the unfortunate *Alceste* at the time of her loss, died in 1831. He passed, with spirit, fortitude, and in the finest temper, as dreary a period as can well occur in any man's life—the fortnight which elapsed between Lord Amherst and his forty-six companions leaving the captain and crew on their desert island, and the arrival of the cruiser from Batavia which relieved them. During this fortnight, the little party of British seamen were besieged by Malay pirates, in fifty or sixty boats, who burned the *Alceste* to the water's edge, and allowed her crew no rest from self-defence, while they had no alternative before them but starvation. Captain Maxwell's command, under these circumstances, and the discipline of his crew, have obtained a world-wide fame, as they truly deserve.—One other rover, Richard Lander, in whose discoveries the nation took an unwonted interest, was cut off untimely, by an attack of the pirates of the Niger in 1834. Lander had attended Captain Clapperton into the interior of Africa, and had witnessed and reported the discoveries made in Clapperton's final expedition; and he had afterwards, when accompanied by his brother, solved the great problem of the termination of the Niger, by following it down from Boussa to the sea. His ears had drunk in the sound of the surf upon the beach, and his eyes had seen the sea-line, dressed all in the more than tropical light of triumph, and of solemn achievement; and this wonderful happiness—as much as is yielded by the whole life of some men—was to be enough for him; for in three years afterwards he was dead, at the age of thirty. He had bought an island off Attah, and meant to establish a trading-station there; but the piratical natives attacked him at a disadvantageous moment, and shot him in the hip, and he died of the wound.

In the department of art there were great losses during

this period. In 1831 died Mrs. Siddons, in her seventy-sixth year. There are few living now who remember her in the fulness of her power; but there are few who have not witnessed the enthusiasm of their fathers and grandparents at the mention of her name, and who are not aware that the enthusiasm was justified as much by the purity of her character as by the glory of the genius which derived its exaltation from that purity. A yet more ancient favourite, the favourite of George III., Quick, the actor, died in the same year, aged eighty-three; and also the monarchical Elliston—and in a few months after, the comic Munden; and in 1833, Edmund Kean, the last of the stars of the first magnitude. Kean was a study as interesting to the mental philosopher as to the playgoer, so extraordinary was his possession of his 'single gift.' It would appear beforehand that to be such an actor as Kean must require a large variety, as well as a high degree of intellectual ability; yet he never manifested any power of mind at all above the average—hardly indeed up to the average—anywhere but on the stage. His mode of life was not such as to husband his powers; and he died at the age of forty-five, worn out by excess and exhaustion of body and mind. His first appearance was at four years of age, riding the elephant in *Bluebeard*; when his beauty, and especially the grandeur of his eyes, fixed the attention of some who afterwards saw him at the summit of his fame. His last appearance was in March 1833, in the character of Othello, when his performance, begun languidly, was broken off in the third act by the utter failure of his strength; and in the ensuing May he was carried to his grave. The prospects of the stage were further darkened by Mr. Young having retired in the preceding year, during which an attempt was made to retrieve the failing fortunes of the drama, by the appointment of a parliamentary committee on dramatic representations, for the purpose of ascertaining what changes could be made in the licensing laws, which could relax the monopoly of the two great theatres, and afford a better opening for authors, actors, and the playgoing public. Amidst all the reasons alleged for the decline of the drama—such as the late dinners of the aristocracy,

the absence of royal patronage, and the spreading objection of certain religious bodies to dramatic representations—it was clear that the main cause of that decline was the decay of the public taste for this kind of amusement, without which the other causes alleged would not have been operative. The committee, however, recommended a large invasion of the existing monopoly of the two great theatres, for their own sake, as well as justice to others; a revision of the system of fees to the censor of plays; and an extension of the same protection to dramatic authors as was enjoyed by authors in other departments of literature. The rising passion for the Italian Opera afforded at the same time a hint to parties concerned to try whether the popular taste for the spoken drama was or was not merging into that for the musical drama; and the New English Opera-house was opened in the summer of 1834.

Two eminent pianists died during 1832—one at the end of a very long career, the other at the beginning of one which promised great marvels—Clementi, who reached his eighty-first year, and George Aspull, who died in his nineteenth.—Augustus Pugin, a Frenchman, spent the last forty years of his life among us, and revived in England the study of ecclesiastical architecture, which has since spread and flourished under the favouring influences of the Tractarian party in the church. He died in 1832, in his sixty-fourth year. In the department of vertù, we lost Christie, who, being intended for the church, became an auctioneer: but such an auctioneer as was never dreamed of before. He raised his business to the rank of a profession, and lived in a world of artistical and philosophical ideas which the poet might covet. He explored the nature of the Greek game invented by Palamedes before the siege of Troy, and believed that he had traced it down, through old ages and countries, to our own firesides, where it bears the name of chess. He wrought among the old idolatries and their symbols, till he penetrated into some curious secrets of art. He was the first authority in the kingdom in pictures, sculptures, and vertù. He made the world understand the value of Mr. Hope's collection of vases; and these friends, after

having solaced themselves with the delights of art and antiquarianism, left the world together. Mr. Christie died on the 2nd, and Mr. Hope on the 3rd of February 1831.—Mr. Hope's name is distinguished on so many grounds, that it is rather difficult to assign his place among our benefactors. From our insular position, and our being kept at home by the long war, and also from our English habit of ridiculing what we do not understand, we were at first guilty of treating Mr. Hope with contempt when he endeavoured to improve our taste in decorative art; and an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, on his folio volume on *Household Furniture and Decorations*, stands as a monument of our shame. But Mr. Hope triumphed; and we have gained, among other things, a lesson in modesty. It was he who first sustained Thorwaldsen, and brought the young Chantrey to light, and stimulated the mature genius of Flaxman. His town and country houses were a paradise of delights to lovers of antiquities and art. He is perhaps most generally known as the author of *Anastasius*, a romance in which the author gives evidence of, among other things, the thoughtful spirit in which he went through his early travels in the east.—To another hunter after antiquities we find ourselves more deeply indebted now than any one was aware of during his life; for John Thomas Smith, keeper of the prints and drawings at the British Museum, died the year before the burning of the houses of parliament. Mr. Smith had published in the closing years of the last century, *Antiquities of London;* and when, in 1800, the accession of members on account of the Irish Union compelled the enlargement of the House of Commons, and the wainscoting of St. Stephen's Chapel was taken down, revealing the old paintings that were behind, Mr. Smith determined on following up his former work with the *Antiquities of Westminster*. He made haste, as the workmen were always at his heels; and in the August mornings he was at work as soon as there was light enough, and painted diligently till the workmen arrived at nine o'clock, when he sometimes saw them destroy the very paintings he had just been copying. He made memoranda, matched the tints carefully, and took all pains to perfect his work, both with regard to the

paintings which were disappearing, and others which it was supposed might last for centuries. Many of the prints, coloured and gilt by his wife and himself, were lost by a fire at the printing-office where they lay; and the loss was severe; but the place given him at the British Museum provided comfortably for his latter days. He is remembered chiefly as the preserver of the antiquities of Westminster; but this was not one of the seven great things by which he used to tell that his life had been distinguished. He delighted to say: 'I received a kiss when a boy from the beautiful Mrs. Robinson—was patted on the head by Dr. Johnson—have frequently held Sir Joshua Reynolds's spectacles—partook of a pot of porter with an elephant—saved Lady Hamilton from falling, when the melancholy news arrived of Lord Nelson's death—three times conversed with George III.—and was shut up in a room with Mr. Kean's lion.' It seems a pity that he did not live a few months longer, to see the flames swallowing up the houses of parliament, and exult in the thought of what he had saved from their ravages.—Cooke, the engraver, who presented such a world of scenery to stayers at home, died in 1834, from brain fever, at the age of fifty-three; and a few weeks after him the aged Thomas Stothard, who began life as the apprentice of a pattern-designer for brocaded silks. Brocaded silks went out of fashion; and Stothard had, as the fruits of his apprenticeship, his nicety of eye and hand, and elegance of taste in designing small embellishments; and he used them in illustrating, with exquisite little designs, Bell's *British Poets*, and the *Novelists' Magazine*. These caught Flaxman's eye, and brought him that good man's friendship. He passed easily from such small works as these to painting figures seven feet high, on the staircase at Burghley House. His latest designs are seen among the illustrations of Rogers's *Poems*, bearing date 1833—some months before his death.—Peter Nasmyth, called 'the English Hobbema,' died in middle life, in 1831, with the love of his art so strong upon him, that when he was dying, and a thunder storm was sweeping by, he asked his sisters to draw aside the curtain, and lift him up, that he might watch the effects of the stormy lights.—And then went the young Liverseedge,

just when his fame was rapidly rising, and before he had reached his thirtieth year. He lived in the world of Shakspeare, Cervantes, and Scott; and it was his picture of Adam Woodcock that was kindling his fame when the cold hand of death was laid on his life.—Jackson, the portrait-painter—not so strong as Raeburn, nor so graceful as Lawrence, but with a clear style of his own, distinguished by its fine colouring—died in 1831: and in 1833 we lost, by a sad accident, Robson, whose landscapes were amongst the most eagerly looked for at the Water-colour Exhibition, every year. The cause of his death was the bursting of a blood-vessel in sea-sickness. His life was happy from that devotedness in the study of nature which is not subject to the disappointment to which most human pursuits are liable. His eagerness about his first earnings was that they might carry him into the Scotch Highlands, where, with his plaid about his shoulders, and the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* in his pocket, and the dusky fells and rolling mists before his eyes, he was happy to his heart's content. The spirit of those early seen Scotch mountains is in his pictures to the last. The frequenters of the Water-colour Exhibition must have been struck by the frequent appearance of Durham and its cathedral. It was because Durham was Robson's native city. He took care that its fine aspect should be nearly as familiar to others as to himself, though they had not, as he had, feasted their eyes upon it from four years old, and crept to the shoulder of every wandering artist who sat down to sketch anywhere in the environs. One of Robson's last pictures was judged to be one of his best —'London from the Bridge, before Sunrise.'

There are, in the province of literature and learning, some names of the departed during this period which we would not let pass without some grateful mention; and there are others which excite a deeper emotion. Among the humbler benefactors in this department was Priscilla Wakefield, whose books for children were usually found in a thumbed and tattered condition on nursery shelves—intensely moral as they were, and fine in the phraseology of their dialogue. In those days, when there were scarcely any children's books in existence, her efforts were as

welcome as they were praiseworthy. Mrs. Wakefield died, very aged, in September 1832.—An excellent man was removed in the same year, before he was forty, who had given his life to such good works that it is sad that his years were not doubled. Richard Evans, himself a scholar, and the conservator of the ancient Welsh manuscripts of the Cambrian Society, took to heart the ignorance of the poor Welsh in London who were not at home in the English tongue. Mr. Evans collected and superintended a little colony of Welsh families—about twenty—in the neighbourhood of one of his warehouses. He instituted weekly lectures on mechanics in Welsh, for all of that people in London who chose to attend; and he spent much money and time in diffusing the means of knowledge among them. —In Hazlitt we lost the prince of critics at this time; and after he was gone, there were many who could never look at a picture, or see a tragedy, or ponder a point of morals, or take a survey of any public character, without a melancholy sense of loss in Hazlitt's absence and silence. There can scarcely be a stronger gratification of the critical faculties than in reading Hazlitt's essays. He was born in 1778, and died of cholera in 1830. He was not an amiable and happy, but he was a strong and courageous-minded man. His constitutional irritability was too restless to be soothed by the influences of literature and art, and his friends suffered from his temper almost as much as himself. Yet he was regarded with respect for his ingenuous courage in saying what was true about many important things and persons of his time, of whom it was fitting that the truth should be told. Hazlitt would have passed his life as an artist, but that he could not satisfy his own critical taste, and had no patience with any position but the first in any department in which he worked. The greater part of his life, therefore, was spent in a province of literature in which he was supreme in his own day, if not alone. As an essayist he had rivals: as a critical essayist, he had none.—Two popular dramatists, O'Keefe and Prince Hoare, died in 1833 and 1834. The name of O'Keefe carries us back some way into the last century, his popular farce, *Tony Lumpkin*, having been acted at the Haymarket Theatre in 1778. After writing fifty

dramatic pieces, he subsided into the quiet befitting his blindness and old age, and lived till his eighty-sixth year. Prince Hoare was very aged too—eighty when he died. In 1788 his comic opera, *No Song, no Supper*, won him his first fame. In more advanced life, he became secretary to the Royal Academy, and from his scholarship in art and literature he was a member of several societies. He was esteemed and beloved for the most engaging moral qualities: and his parting act was a beneficent one: he bequeathed his library to the Royal Society of Literature.—The venerable William Roscoe, of Liverpool, died in 1831—venerable for the benignity of his character and the purity of his tastes, and especially for the gentle steadiness with which, through long seasons of trial, he upheld the cause of the negro against the slaveholding spirit of Liverpool in his day. On this matter, he never, with all his love of peace and social good-will, gave way for a moment. It is for this, rather than his literary acts, that Mr. Roscoe is and will be remembered. His principal work was the *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*, which obtained great reputation at once, from the character of the times, which, impeding research of the kind required, rendered such works scarce and extremely superficial. Mr. Roscoe reached his eighty-first year.

Some of the most affectionate and solemn associations relating to this period are called up by the name of Mackintosh. Sir James Mackintosh died, unexpectedly, in 1832, at the age of sixty-seven; and the word 'untimely' was applied to his death, through a sort of general expectation that a man of such powers would yet do something which would make his great name live after him. In early life, when he published his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, his name had been in every mouth; and in his latest years, the House of Commons listened, heart and soul, whenever he spoke. But he was not destined to effect much during his life, or to make a monument for himself. He had stores of knowledge, remarkable powers of subtle thought, and an unsurpassed facility of expression; but a fatal indolence, which extended to the interaction of his faculties, scattered his resources, and vitiated much of the work which he actually did. His *Dissertation, containing*

a General View of the Progress of Ethical Philosophy—prefixed to the *Encylopædia Britannica*—is the work on which his reputation is commonly supposed to rest; but it is a more frail support than the memories of those who knew him, and than the records of his speeches in parliament. It will not bear the test of advancing science, any more than the kindred writings of Dugald Stewart. In parliament, his heart and voice were always on the side of justice and humanity, as justice and humanity appeared to him. In print and in private, though there might be much that was superficial and unsound in his views, as well as subtle and profound, the spirit of earnestness and reverence was never absent. He held the office of recorder of Bombay for some years; and was in parliament for several sessions; and had a way to any eminence opened to him by the pioneering influence of general expectation —yet he died amidst a celebrity which had still more of anticipation than of acknowledgment in it. His life had been a swaying between contemplation and action; and, though he might by this have obtained some enlargement for his own mind, the indecision was fatal to his leaving any substantial memorial of himself in either region. He enjoyed the friendship and homage of most of the leading men of his time; and there was no one living who did not share his placid good-will. His integrity in political life was in accordance with the simple unworldliness of his mind.

Henry Mackenzie, who wrote *The Man of Feeling*, died at the age of eighty-five in 1831. A mistake of his own affords as good a eulogium as his worshippers could desire. From the unbounded success of his beautiful story, *The Man of Feeling*, he was induced to offer a companion novel, *The Man of the World*, which shows unmistakably the unsophisticated character of the author, and his inability to understand the ways and thoughts of worldly men. Those who were amazed at the badness of the second tale should have felt rebuked for their disappointment by the beauty of the first.—Anna Maria Porter, the novelist, died in 1832, just three months before him whose marvellous works had swallowed up the fame of all contemporary writers of fiction. While Scott was yet but a boy, how-

ever—while he was lying on the heathery hillside, nourishing and playing with his powers of conception and narration, Miss Porter's novels—*Thaddeus of Warsaw*, the *Recluse of Norway*, and others—were giving great pleasure, and preparing the multitude of lovers of fiction for the treat to come.—Of Scott, it is impossible, as it is needless, to speak at length in this place. Every trait of his life is in all memories; every character of his long-drawn pageant is vivid before all eyes. Any attempt to estimate his share in modifying the mind of his time would be in vain; and if it were not, the materials for an estimate lie equally open to all. Every one can inquire of himself what the writings of Scott have been to himself and to those whom he knows best; and from that recognition, let him form his estimate. As for the man himself, every one knows all that can be told, and sees that he was not so happy or so wise as such a genius as his should have made him; that he did not honour his genius, and repose upon it as it would have been bliss to do; but looked down to lower objects, and so was deprived of his repose by that very genius, avenging itself. In a mood of respectful compassion, the nation had seen him sinking under toil to which a common-place ambition had subjected him, and which it would have been cruelty to compel him to forego. For some time before his death, his mind had sunk utterly; and at last the day of repose for the feeble body came—brightly and mildly. It was in the noon of one of those autumn days which are so sweet in Scotland, when the window at Abbotsford was open, and the ripple of the Tweed over the stones was heard by those who were around the death-bed, that the eyes closed and the breathing ceased. The life which had gone out had been crowded with toils; the world was full of these rich gifts, and the national heart was sad at the thought that there could be no more. The gifts remain, however, a boon for each coming generation as it rises; and thus the fame of Scott may well be committed to the general charge. —There was a sad sweep among his connections afterwards. Within half a year, his confidant, partner, friend, and printer, James Ballantyne, without whose co-operation the whole of his enterprise must have borne a different

character, died in middle age. And in the next June, the daughter Ann, who had tended Scott in his long decline, drooped and sank. And since that time all his other children have died—in these few years—and no descendants but two grandchildren are left to inherit the glory for which he cared so little, and the estate for which he sacrificed so much. Such are the caprices of the human mind and the human lot!

Of poets, we lost, during this period, some of great note. The elegant, scholarly Sotheby was not one to be popular; but he gave much pleasure to his own circle of admirers, and his life was happy in a serene course of literary exertion. He made many elegant translations, and wrote tragedies, masques, and epics; none of them containing elements of grandeur, but all of them full of purity and grace. He lived to seventy-six, and died at the close of 1833.—The venerable George Crabbe died, in old age, in 1832, leaving behind him memories which any one might covet. It is one of Burke's titles to honour that he saved this pure genius from extinction under the pressure of poverty, from no lower impulse than a generous humanity. Crabbe was starving, when he made a simple and straight appeal to the great man, and was met in the spirit in which brother should meet brother in our perplexed human life. From that hour, all went well with Crabbe; and his long life was passed in virtuous clerical duty, in domestic peace, and in giving a charming utterance to his experience of the heart, and his observation of the various human lot. His poems are full of minute details, ennobled by a genial spirit, and made touching by the pathos of truth and love. His poems, besides finding their way at once to a million of hearts and homes, remain a quiet, but living picture of English life in his time, which may probably kindle the heart of a remote antiquarianism in ages when English life, always the same in spirit, may have changed most of its forms.—S. T. Coleridge may perhaps be best placed among the poets, rather than the philosophers of his time, because the finest characteristics of his philosophy give an immortal substance to his poetry, while they leave his philosophy without base or permanent substance. A genius so lofty and so various has rarely

distinguished man; but the absence of one essential element brought it down to a lower level than that of a crowd of otherwise inferior minds. With an imagination which soared above the stars, a subtlety which would have enabled him to hold his place in a council in pandemonium, a power of abstraction which should have strengthened him to put the sensuous world beneath his feet, and an eloquence which might have enslaved the human race, he had no power of will—of that virtuous will without which every man, be he who he may, is himself a slave. In Coleridge it was a constitutional defect, early marked, and fatal to his life. It was a constitutional deficiency, to be allowed for as such; but it must not be disguised that it rendered him incapable of duty—of fidelity in friendship, in citizenship, and in domestic life. And it vitiated his philosophy by eating out of it its reality and substantive truth. Thus, his theology was anything but the gospel—the religion which men prize, because it is equally the treasure of the lowly and the exalted in intellect; it was an airy fabric of the argumentative faculties and the imagination, and baseless sentiment, and not a deep concern of the understanding and the heart. And thus it was with his philosophy; for true philosophy absolutely requires a broad foundation of science, and the vital element which can be supplied only from the affections. This said, which in conscience must be said, the rest remains wonderful—even awful in its wonder. And the consolation of the case lies in the virtue which the power and the deficiency together called out in other men. The forbearance, the tenderness, the reverence, with which Coleridge was regarded, in the face of his vitiated life, are more than a compensation for what was wanting in himself. From the days when awe-struck schoolmates gathered round 'the inspired boy' in the cloisters at Christ's Hospital, to the present moment, when his worshippers turn away from a sound of censure, as from a desecration of his grave, he has met with that magnanimous justice which it requires some of the loftiest qualifications to command; and in this influence lay one of the chief benefits of his life. Others were the sublime faculty by which he opened to us new worlds of thought, and made the oldest new; the subtlety of analysis by

which he displayed the inner workings of what was before our eyes, before closed and impenetrable; the instinct by which he discerned relations among things which before were isolated; and the thrilling sense of beauty which he awakened by bringing all the appearances of nature into illustration of ideas before wholly abstract. Thus, his discourses on the laws and facts of thought, his dramatic criticisms, and his own poems, are full of lights and charms which hardly need the magic of his utterance to make them intoxicate the young thinker, and stimulate the faculties of the more mature. He was the wonder of his time. If he had not been subject to one great deficiency, he would have been its miracle. As it is, his fame is not likely to grow—less because his magical voice is silenced, than because his enchantment itself must be broken up by the touch of science. Even then, glorious will be the fragments that will remain. They will be truly the traces of old idolatries—not of one, but of many; for he spent his life in the worship of a succession of idols—those idols being ideas, which he called opinions, and which he was for ever changing. S. T. Coleridge was born in a Devonshire vicarage, in 1772; and he died at Highgate, on the 25th of July 1834.

A man of great benevolence, who indirectly contributed much to the great work of national education, which yet remains, for the most part, to be achieved, ought to be mentioned at the close of this period. Dr. Bell, a prebendary of Westminster, was once a chaplain in India, and there conceived the idea of extending the benefits of education by setting pupils to instruct each other. He reported his method; and it was soon adopted in England to such an extent, that he saw 10,000 schools established, attended by 600,000 children. He believed that the object of general education was gained; and so did many others. It required some years to show that nothing like education can be obtained by the ignorant teaching the ignorant. The results have been such as to disabuse the most sanguine. But public attention was turned to the instruction of the childhood and youth of the nation; and, in this sense, we may be said to be still benefiting by the introduction of the Bell and Lancaster system. Dr. Bell

employed his large fortune in acts of beneficence, devoting £50,000 to the establishment of a college in his native city of St. Andrews. He died in January 1831.

Having now recorded the acts, and buried the treasures, of an important period of our history, we must proceed to learn what further blessings have been brought home to our country and people by the life-giving hand of peace.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

The three Parties—The Duke's Offices—Position of Sir R. Peel—New Cabinet—Dissolution of Parliament—Tamworth Manifesto—The New Parliament—Temper of the Time—Election of the Speaker—King's Speech—Debate on the Malt-tax—Lord Londonderry's Appointment—Dissenters' Marriages—Ecclesiastical Commission—Ministerial Defeats—London University Charter—Conflicts in Parliament—Appropriation Question—Resignation of the Cabinet.

FROM the time of the passage of the Reform Bill, the three parties in the state—kindred with those which exist in every free state—began to accept one another's new titles, and the professions included in those titles. The Tories, Whigs, and Radicals wished to be called Conservatives, Reformers, and Radical Reformers; and the easy civility of calling people by the name they like best, spread through public manners till the word Tory was seldom heard except among old-fashioned people, or in the heat of political argument. The Whig title has since revived—inevitably—from the Whigs having ceased even to pretend to the character of Reformers; and the Radical Reformers were not numerous or powerful enough in parliament to establish for themselves a title which should become traditional. There was some dispute, and a good deal of recrimination, at the outset, about the assumption by each party of its own title; the Tories declaring that they were as reforming, in intention and in fact, as the Whigs, only in a preservative way; the Whigs declaring that the only true conservatism was through reforms like theirs; and the Radicals, who were called Destructives by both the others,

declaring that a renovation of old institutions—a regeneration on occasion—was the only way to avoid that ultimate revolution which the Tories would invite and the Whigs permit. While the titles were changing, the parties were as yet essentially the same as ever; as usual, they consisted mainly of the representatives of those who had much to lose, those who had much to gain, and the umpire party, disliked by both, whose function is to interpose in times of crisis, and whose fate it is to exhaust the credit acquired in such seasons during long intervals of indolence and vacillation. Such was, as usual, the constitution of the three political parties, after the passage of the Reform Bill, and when the changes in their titles actually took place; but there were clear-sighted men at that time who perceived that the change of names was but the first sign of an approaching disintegration of the parties themselves; a disintegration which must be succeeded by more or less fusion—that fusion being introductory to a new exhibition of products. The old parties, notwithstanding their new names, were about to disappear. They could not be annihilated; but they would reappear so transmuted that none but the philosopher would know them again—with new members, a new language, a new task, and a whole set of new aims. As much of this prevision has come true as time has yet allowed for. The disintegration and fusion have taken place; and all thoughtful people see that a new formation of parties must be at hand. One limit of the transition period of parties remains still future; the other must be laid down at the date of Sir Robert Peel's accession to power, in December 1834. Here we have the old Eldon-oracle speaking again—speaking 'in the spirit of fear,' and not 'in that of power, and of love, and of a sound mind,' and therefore giving out its truth in a dismal disguise; but still giving out more truth than anybody could use at the time. Here we have Lord Eldon's party view of the future, while the Wellingtons and Rodens, and Knatchbulls and Lyndhursts, and Wharncliffes and Ellenboroughs, were in power, at the opening of the year 1835: 'The new ministers certainly have the credit, if that be creditable, of being inclined to get as much popularity by what are called

reforms as their predecessors; and if they do not, at present, go to the full length to which the others were going, they will at least make so many important changes in Church and State, that nobody can guess how far the precedents they establish may lead to changes of a very formidable kind hereafter.' Though Lord Eldon could see no other reason for Tories making changes than a hankering after popularity, we can discern in the facts, and his statement of them, the beginning of that wasting away of parties which he did not live to see.

The new Conservative rule began with a joke. Some, who could not take the joke easily, were very angry; but most people laughed; and among them, the person most nearly concerned—the Duke of Wellington—laughed as cheerfully as anybody. Sir Robert Peel was at Rome; it must be a fortnight before he could arrive; and nothing could be done about the distribution of office in his absence; so the duke took the business of the empire upon himself during the interval. This he called not deserting his sovereign; and he was as well satisfied with himself in this singular way of getting over the crisis, as on all the other occasions when he refused to desert his sovereign. His devotion was such, that for the interval he undertook eight offices—five principal, and three subordinate. 'The Irish hold it impossible,' wrote a contemporary, 'for a man to be in two places at once, "like a bird." The duke has proved this no joke—he is in five places at once. At last, then, we have a united government. The cabinet council sits in the duke's head, and the ministers are all of one mind.' The angry among the Liberals treated the spectacle as they would have done if the duke had proposed to carry on the government permanently in this manner. Condemnations passed at public meetings were forwarded to him with emphatic assurances that the condemnation was unanimous; an orator here and there drew out in array all the consequences that could ever arise from the temporary shift being made a precedent; and Lord Campbell condescended to talk, at a public meeting at Edinburgh, of impeaching the multifarious minister. At all this, and at a myriad of jokes, the duke laughed, while he worked like a clerk from day to

day, till the welcome sound of Sir Robert Peel's carriage-wheels was heard.

It is a strong proof of the virulence of the party-spirit of the time, that even generous-minded men, experienced in the vicissitudes of politics, could not at first—nor till after the lapse of months or years—appreciate the position of Sir Robert Peel. Everybody saw it at last; and there were many who, during that hard probation, watched him and sympathised with him with daily increasing interest and admiration; but there were too many who turned his difficulties against him, and who were insensible till too late to the rebuke involved in the fine temper which became nobler, and the brilliant statesmanship which became more masterly, as difficulties which he had not voluntarily encountered pressed upon him with a daily accumulating force. His being at Rome proved how little he had anticipated being called to office. He had no option about accepting it—his sovereign sent for him, and he must come; and when he arrived, he found there was no possibility of declining a task which he believed to be hopeless. Unpopular as the Whig ministry had become, the Conservatives were not the better for it, but the worse; for the cry for reform was growing stronger every day; and he could have no hope of gratifying the majority of his own party, as he could not attempt to repeal the Reform Bill, or to get back to the old ways. There was nothing before him but failure, with discredit, on every hand; but while he would certainly never have chosen to fill a position so hard and so hopeless, he had a spirit whose nature it was to rise under difficulties, and to feel the greatest alacrity under desperate conditions.

One of the desperate conditions was, that he could not form the cabinet which his intentions and the necessities of the times required. He arrived in London early on Tuesday, the 9th of December, and went at once to the king; yet on the next Saturday nothing was known but that he would himself be chancellor of the exchequer, as well as first lord of the treasury. Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham had declined being of his corps; and he did not accept the ultra-Tory adherents of the duke whom he found hanging about on his return. In his ministry

are found, naturally, but unfortunately for its chances, four men whose political steadiness could never again be counted upon—Lords Lyndhurst and Rosslyn, Sir James Scarlett, now made Lord Abinger, and Mr. Alexander Baring, afterwards Lord Ashburton. The rest were of such politics as to discredit at once all professions of the duke and his friends, in Sir R. Peel's absence, of the desire of the government to promote all rational reforms. The duke himself went to the foreign office; Mr. Goulburn, to the home; Mr. Herries, to the war; and Lord Aberdeen, to the colonial office. Sir Henry Hardinge was Irish secretary; Lord Wharncliffe, lord privy seal; and Lord Rosslyn, president of the council. Lord Lyndhurst was on the woolsack, and Lord Abinger became chief-baron. Some of the king's sons-in-law, who were Whigs, resigned their offices in the household, and were succeeded by Conservatives of a very pure water.

Another of the desperate conditions was the state of parties in the Commons. From the moment there was a rumour of a difficulty between the king and Lord Melbourne, the Whigs and Radicals in the House began to incline towards each other, lest the reformers of England should lose any of the ground they had so hardly gained. From the moment it became known that Lord Melbourne had declined the earldom and the garter, which the poor king had the bad taste to offer as a compensation for unreasonable treatment, all differences were sunk for the season, and the two parties united as one; so that it was believed on every hand that little more than a fourth —certainly less than a third—of the existing House of Commons would support the new ministry. Though the people might not, at that juncture, return a much more favourable House, the experiment must be tried. Parliament was prorogued on the 18th of December; and on the 30th it was dissolved by proclamation, and a new one was convoked, to meet on the 19th of February.

Before taking the sense of the country, it was necessary for the minister to put forth some declaration of what the country had to expect from him; and this he did in the form of an address to his Tamworth constituents, avowing that he was at the same time addressing the whole middle

classes of the nation. It is observable that while he speaks undoubtingly of his obligation to take office, and heartily of his intention to toil and persevere, there is scarcely an expression in the address which indicates hope of permanence and success. Its tone is cheerful, but no one could call it sanguine; and, in indicating the principles on which he means to act, he speaks for himself alone, and makes no reference to a cabinet policy, or to administrative co-operation in any way, merely declaring, in a parenthetical manner, that the sentiments of his colleagues are in entire concurrence with his own.

First, he declares himself a reformer of abuses, and points to his own great measures in regard to the currency, to criminal law, to jury trial, and other matters, in proof of his disposition to remove abuses and facilitate improvements. In the same spirit, he would accept and make operative any reform actually accomplished, whether he originally approved of it or not: and he would therefore accept the Reform Bill, considering it a 'final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question;' and he would carry out its intentions, supposing those to imply a careful review of old institutions, undertaken in a friendly spirit, and with a purpose of improvement. Coming down to particulars, he would not interfere with the inquiry of the corporation commissioners, of which he had shown his approbation by being voluntarily a member of the parliamentary committee upon it. He had voted with government on Lord Althorp's church-rate measure, and was still willing to relieve the Dissenters from the grievance of paying church-rates, and of a celebration of marriage in terms to which they conscientiously objected. He would not admit the right of Dissenters to admission to the universities; but he would recommend an alteration of the regulations which prevented any of the king's subjects from being on a perfect equality with others in respect to any civil privilege. He would not countenance any retrospective inquiry into the pension list—filled, as it had been, under circumstances that had passed away; but he would advocate more care in future in the conferring of pensions. About church reform in Ireland, again, his mind was not changed: he

was in favour of the best distribution, be it ever so new, of ecclesiastical property for ecclesiastical purposes; but he could not sanction its application to any other than strictly ecclesiastical objects. He wished to see a commutation of tithe in England; and with regard to deeper matters—the laws which govern the Church—he desired time for further thought, and opportunity for new light. The somewhat deprecatory tone of the conclusion of this address is striking now, and must have been strongly felt by all the many classes of readers who thronged to get a sight of it on the morning of its appearance. 'I enter upon the arduous duties assigned to me with the deepest sense of the responsibility they involve, with great distrust of my own qualifications for their adequate discharge, but at the same time with a resolution to persevere which nothing could inspire but the strong impulse of public duty, the consciousness of upright motives, and the firm belief that the people of this country will so far maintain the prerogative of the king as to give to the ministers of his choice, not an implicit confidence, but a fair trial.'

Such was the text on which the popular comment of the elections was to proceed. It was much more liberal than the Liberals had expected; but when they looked at the group of colleagues behind, they distrusted the minister and his manifesto, and set vigorously to work to elect a House which should bring all his counsels to nought, and frustrate all his efforts. He could not have said that they, as Liberals, were wrong; and neither he nor they could anticipate how their opposition would rouse his faculties and exalt his fame. This address appeared in one paper as a mere advertisement, in small type. In another, it was conspicuous as the leading article. It was immediately reprinted, throughout the country; and it is strange now to see it standing under the heading of 'the Tory manifesto.' If this was its true title, Toryism had indeed changed its character, much and rapidly.

The first reformed parliament had not satisfied its constituents: it had done some wrong things, and omitted many right ones; but it had had the great virtue of being in advance of the ill-compacted, desultory, un-

businesslike Whig cabinet. It would have done more and better but for the drag of the administration, which was always put on when there was up-hill work to be attempted. If the same parliament had been allowed to remain, its great reform party no longer impeded by the Whigs, but aided by them, great things might be hoped. As it was not to remain it was parted with more respectfully and good-humouredly than could have been supposed possible three months before, under a prevailing sense that much allowance must be made for the disadvantage of the reform ministry having so soon fallen so far below all rational expectation. Everything might be hoped from the next House of Commons. The first object of every class of reformers was clear enough—to depose the Conservatives, and reinstate a reforming ministry; and it would be perfectly easy to do this by union between the Whig and Radical parties, though, as every one knew, there would be more Conservatives returned under a Peel, than under a Grey ministry. More Conservatives were returned, but the reformers had still an overwhelming majority; and from the hour when the members assembled, it was only a question of time—a consideration of sense and temper—when and how Sir Robert Peel should be compelled to retire. The popular power being thus clearly able to do what it would, it now appears strange that the virulence of the time was what it was. The minister seems to have been almost the only man who preserved temper and cheerfulness, though his position was incomparably the hardest—placed, as he was, in that hopeless position, without any choice of his own. It is not necessary to record the ill-humour of the time by anecdotes which would now convey more disgrace than the parties deserved; but it may be said that the kingdom was covered with altercation, from the House of Lords, where the late ministers spoke with extreme bitterness of late events, down to the street-corners and police-courts, where fretful men complained of each other, and of the police, and the bill-stickers, and all officers concerned in all elections. The Conservatives quarrelled among themselves quite as virulently as either party with the other. The old Tories put out a caricature of the search of

Diogenes, who lights upon Lord Eldon as the only honest man. The *Times* lectured the party on its slowness and apathy; and other Conservative papers denounced all compromise with reform, now that the opportunity was present of putting down the Papists and the Radicals by the powers of government, under the countenance of the king. As soon as it was clear that the reformers had a very large majority, and when the *Times* retreated so far as to discuss the possibility of a coalition between the Grey and Peel parties, the other leading paper, the *Standard*, intimated that the new parliament would be immediately dissolved, in order to afford the people an opportunity of reconsidering their duty, and returning a House more agreeable to the other ruling powers. This intimation caused such an outcry about a return of the time of the Stuarts, that the paper softened its menace immediately; but it could not recall the hint it had given to the constituencies to keep up their organisation, in readiness for a new election, at any hour. Accusations of bribery all round were profuse, and, on the whole, too well deserved; for the occasion was indeed a most critical one, when the corrupt, as well as the honourable, felt called on to put forth all their resources. Then, there was incessant quarrelling about the waverers, or doubtful men, who were just sufficient to make it difficult to calculate, and easy to dispute, what the Conservative minority would in reality be. Then, again, it was certain that, from the losses to the reform party in the English boroughs where corporation reform was most wanted, the two parties were run so close that any effectual parliamentary majority must be yielded by Scotland and Ireland; and this gave occasion for a fierce renewed cry about Papist supremacy. When the last election returns came in, it appeared to the most careful calculators that the reformers were secure of a majority of above 130; and, if all the doubtfuls were given to the ministerial party, the Conservatives would still be in a minority of 82. Thus the fate of the new ministry was decided, and known to be so, before the premier met parliament—known at least by the Liberals, though the premier himself appears to have gained confidence as time went on,

from finding how much reform it was practicable for him to effect. At a dinner at Tamworth, he intimated that the ominous predictions of his being unable to carry on the government might not, perhaps, be necessarily true: parliament might give him a fair trial; and he could not but think that many who were classed as reformers held views very like his own.

The reformers, however, felt that this was no time for a comparison of views on any particular subjects, but rather an occasion for deciding between opposite principles of government in the large. In this there can now be no question that they were right; and the more the late Whig government had fallen short of fidelity to reform principles, the more important it was now to reassert them, and to put aside any minister, be his personal merits what they might, and his policy ever so promising, who stood forth as the representative of the Tory party with a group of Tories at his back. 'Public principle'—however the words might be ridiculed by the newspapers of the day as meaning private interests and jealous tempers—did require that the distinction of parties should at that crisis be made as conspicuous as possible; and if anger, and disappointment, and jealousy among ministerial men on the Whig side did make sad havoc with temper and manners, such incidents did not alter the duty of the time. Those reformers who were much of Sir Robert Peel's mind about many things, and might have supported him in a tranquil organic season, were now bound to set him aside if they could, because the first duty of the critical period was to choose decidedly between an unregenerate and a regenerate system of government. There was not, therefore, necessarily any spirit of faction in the determination of the reformers to begin the campaign by requiring a speaker of their own party. Whether or not they had been right hitherto in maintaining Sir Charles Manners Sutton in the chair, it was clear that it would not be right now. Times were altered; and the man was visibly altered by the change in the times. He had been unable—as everybody else was unable—to resist the temptation to active partisanship; and he was so far less qualified for the chair than

formerly, even if no 'great public principle' had become involved in the question of his reappointment.

Mr. Abercromby was the man on whom the wishes of the reformers settled; but Mr. Abercromby objected to the nomination, and he resisted the honour till nearly the last hour. He yielded, however, and immediately left town; while it was universally known that on the other side even urgent personal canvassing was practised. This difference, and the inclination of many quiet or lukewarm reformers to have a speaker of such proved qualifications as Sir C. Manners Sutton in so troubled a session as was before them, rendered it doubtful, to the last moment, which way the election would turn. There was an extremely full House on the critical 19th of February: only a few of the doubtfuls and six Tories were absent; almost all the rest of the waverers and thirty-five reformers voted for the ministerial speaker; and yet Mr. Abercromby was chosen by a majority of ten. The reformers from this time knew that the session was theirs, if they were active and united. Sir Charles Manners Sutton at once received the peerage which his long services truly merited, being called to the Upper House by the title of Viscount Canterbury.

On the 24th, the king came down to open parliament in person. His speech declared the rising prosperity of manufactures and commerce, but deplored the depression of agriculture, and recommended to parliament the consideration of reducing the burdens upon land. Wearisome as it is to record and to read of the depression of agriculture, almost from year to year, it becomes the more necessary to do so as we approach the period when a free-trade in corn was demanded by a majority of the people. It is necessary to see, as we proceed, what the state of things was which the opponents of change would have perpetuated—what the good old times were, which they were unwilling to abandon. This year, the farmers' cry came up so piteously that it was echoed in the king's speech; and it was left for the multitude below to wonder how it was that there were any farmers in England—so losing a business as farming evidently was. Another series or two of farmers had to be impoverished yet before the withering

system of protection was put an end to; but every complaint to government, and every mention by the sovereign, of agricultural distress, now went to remind the thoughtful that there must be something radically wrong in the existing system, whatever might be the difficulty of agreeing about a better. The king also requested the attention of parliament to the tithe questions in Ireland and England; to ecclesiastical reform in regard to discipline and the administration of justice; to the best way of relieving Dissenters from a form of the celebration of marriage to which they conscientiously objected; to the municipal corporation question; to the operations of the ecclesiastical commission; and to the condition of the Church of Scotland.

The conflict of parties began at once, in the House of Lords, about the address. According to Lord Eldon's report, there was a serious dread, some days before, of a large majority against ministers, even in the Upper House; and the Conservatives made a solemn call upon each other to muster strongly, for the last chance of preserving their dignities and their property, lest their children, like those of the French nobility, should be doomed to become commoners. The feeble old man was himself in his place, almost for the last time. 'I sat,' he says, 'last night in the House of Lords till between twelve and one—till all in that House was over. I certainly would much rather have sat by my fireside, quietly, and enjoying the comforts of conversation.' But he was resolved, as long as he lived, to do his part in saving the monarchy. The debate was deformed by much anger and mutual unfairness. In both Houses the recrimination was unworthy of so great an occasion—the late ministry unreasonably finding fault with the dissolution of parliament, and with the Duke of Wellington's way of conducting the business of the state during the premier's return from Rome; and the Conservatives unwisely dwelling on an anecdote of the time which has never ceased to be vividly remembered. It had actually happened that before the king could have sent to the Duke of Wellington, and before Lord Melbourne could have officially communicated to his colleagues the state of the king's mind, an ostentatious statement appeared in a morning paper—a statement

which must have been derived from a cabinet minister, and which was universally attributed to Lord Brougham —that Lord Melbourne's administration was dismissed, and that 'the queen had done it all.' Though the speech made no allusion to the change of ministry, and Lord Melbourne's proposed amendment was also silent about it, the anecdotage of the crisis formed the chief part of the debates on the address in both Houses. The amendments insisted on carrying out the principles of reform in regard to the projects contemplated by the late parliament, and lamented its unnecessary dissolution before those reforms were completed. In the Lords' House, the amendment was simply negatived. In the Commons it was carried by a majority of seven. And here, at the outset, the premier had to consider what was to be done. He took time to consider, in order, as he frankly avowed, to guard himself against any misleading from mortification, and to ascertain whether the vote conveyed the real sense of the House. When satisfied that it did so, he did not oppose the amendment of the address; and it was carried up to the king, therefore, with the unusual feature conspicuous in it of the discontent of the Commons with the late dissolution of their House. The king was sorry, of course, that the Commons did not concur with him in regard to that act, and declared that he exercised his prerogatives with the sole view of promoting the welfare of his people.

The restlessness of the opposition was increased by the two majorities they had already obtained; and, through one opening or another, inquiries were incessantly conveyed to the minister whether he meant to resign. His answer was that the two votes did not convey a declaration of want of confidence in the government, and he therefore thought it his duty to proceed. These inquiries naturally caused rumours out of doors; and then again, these rumours were reproduced in the House, to elicit further explanations from ministers. On the 2nd of March, Lord John Russell made a statement of two reports which were prevalent—that parliament was again to be dissolved, on the first ministerial reverse; and that, if this should happen before the Mutiny Act could be discussed, the army was to be kept up, on the responsibility of the

administration, without the assent of parliament. That such a project should have been imputed to one political leader by another, in our day, is a remarkable indication of the disturbance of the general mind. Lord John Russell declared that he should avoid putting the direct question whether these things were true; but that he intended to test the disposition of the cabinet by bringing forward, at a time of which he gave notice, the appropriation question, and that of municipal reform. The premier's reply was clear and frank. He had never discussed or proposed anywhere a speedy dissolution of parliament; but it was not his business to place in abeyance, by any declaration of his, the royal prerogative of dissolving parliament: and this, as he observed, was a fuller reply than Lord Grey had given to the well-remembered question of Lord Wharncliffe on the same subject. As to the Irish Church question, he and his colleagues were anxious that the commission should prosecute their labours, as yet only half-finished; and when they had furnished the requisite information, government and the country would see what ought to be done—the present government adhering to its principle that the property of the Church ought to be applied only to strictly ecclesiastical purposes, but being ready to amend the distribution of that property, when the requisite evidence should be complete. There was no objection on the part of the government to any needful reform of corporation abuses; but neither they, nor anybody else, could declare what such reforms should be till the commissioners should have offered their report. As for the rumour about the maintenance of the army without the sanction of parliament, he had never heard the subject mentioned till that night. The same kind of suspicious inquiry was made of Lord Aberdeen in the Upper House about the carrying out of the Emancipation Act in the West Indies, when the colonial secretary declared that no one could be more anxious than himself—whose first vote had been against slavery—that the act should be completely carried out; and he had written to Lord Sligo to entreat him to remain in his office of governor of Jamaica, and complete his work, without any misgiving on account of the change of administration at home.

On the next great subject of discussion, men of all parties united on either side. Lord Chandos proposed, to the embarrassment of the government which he usually supported, the repeal of the malt-duty—the promise of which boon to the farmers was believed to have greatly influenced the elections. Many Whig and Radical members agreed with the premier that such a proposition could not be entertained before the financial condition of the country was known; that there was no reason to suppose that the surplus in the treasury could meet such a demand; that it was not the barley-growers whose distress now called for attention, as the price of barley had been rising for a considerable period; and that it was extremely doubtful whether the farmers would be peculiarly benefited by the repeal of the duty. On the division, Mr. Grote and Mr. Hume were found voting on opposite sides; and three members of the late government spoke in support of Sir Robert Peel against the motion of his own adherent: the strife of party was visible only in the sarcasms thrown out in the course of debate; and the majority against the repeal of the malt-tax was 158.

On the next occasion of defeat, the administration had little sympathy from any quarter. They had made an indefensible appointment to an office of high importance, and they had to take the consequences; and the premier among others, not only because his was the first responsibility in such cases—however his opinion might be overruled in private—but because he attempted a lamentable defence in parliament of an appointment which could in no view be justified. Early in January, the following paragraph appeared in the *Times* newspaper: 'We notice, merely to discountenance, an absurd report, that Lord Londonderry has been, or is to be, named ambassador to St. Petersburg. The rumour is a sorry joke.' It was no joke. If all England had been searched for a man whose politics were most like those of the Emperor of Russia, Lord Londonderry might well have been chosen; and he was now to be sent to represent the mind of England to the Emperor of Russia—now, when the affairs of Turkey were in a state to require the most accurate representation of the opinion of Great Britain—now, when Poland was

commanding the sympathies of the whole world, but when Lord Londonderry was in the habit of speaking decisively of the Poles as 'the rebellious subjects of the Emperor of Russia;' and when he professed himself a sympathiser with Don Carlos and Don Miguel. His lordship's notions about a fair personal interest in public service were also too well known throughout the country to dispose the people of England to place him again in their service. It could never be forgotten that he had, a few years before, brought disgrace upon himself by declaring, in the House of Lords, that he had been calumniated and injured by the foreign office, and challenging Lord Dudley, then foreign secretary, to produce a certain correspondence which would explain the case. In the course of explanation it appeared that Lord Londonderry had been importunate for a pension, in consideration of his diplomatic services; and that the calm and moderate Lord Liverpool had written in pencil on the back of the letter, 'This is too bad.' These things, before well known, were now repeated in parliament, and the portrait of the rank Tory nobleman, with his rashness, his obtuseness, his narrowness, his ingenuous conclusions that the people and their purses were created for the benefit of the aristocracy, was held up before the public eye in a way infinitely damaging to the administration. Sir Robert Peel held up, on the other side, his manliness and his military qualifications—qualities which, with some other very good ones, nobody denied, but which did not constitute him a fitting representative of the mind of the British nation at the court of Russia. The appointment was not actually made out; but Sir R. Peel declared himself ready to maintain the nomination. The difficulty, however, was ended by Lord Londonderry immediately withdrawing. The debate in the Commons was published on Saturday; and on Monday, the marquis declared, with his characteristic manliness, that he saw it to be impossible that he could act with advantage at a foreign court, while disowned as a representative by any considerable portion of the political body at home; and therefore, while scorning all scoffs and imputations, and heedless of invidious censure, he should for the sake of his sovereign decline the service proposed. The Whig Lords were anxious to

explain that their disapprobation was grounded on the speeches he had made in that House, which had manifested his dismay and anger at the expulsion of the Bourbons, his rancour against the Poles, and his sympathies with Don Miguel and Don Carlos; which state of opinion seemed to qualify him rather for the post of Russian ambassador in England than British ambassador in Russia. The ministers were as severely judged by their own party on this occasion as by any other. They had humbled the king, and rendered his prerogative ineffective; if it had before been true that the sovereign could not practically carry out any such appointment without the approbation of parliament, express or implied, the truth had not been exhibited; and decent appointments had made all easy. In this case, the king had been first misled and then humbled; and the Conservatives had little more mercy on the ministers than anybody else.

In the preceding year, Lord John Russell had brought forward a measure for the relief of Dissenters in regard to the marriage ceremony. It was well meant; but the Dissenters could not possibly accept it. All proposed legislation on this subject, thus far, had been kind in its spirit, and earnest in the desire to give relief; but it had unconsciously carried an air of condescension—a supposition of respective superiority and inferiority not admissible in affairs of conscience. No one could be further than Lord John Russell from sympathising in the sayings of the Eldons and the Wynfords, and others, who could not conceive of a Dissenter as a man whose rights were as precious, and whose conscience was to be as much considered, as their own. Nobody could be further than Lord John Russell from the insolence of asking what harm it could do a Dissenter to be blessed in a form of words offensive to his religious feelings, as long as he was not required himself to repeat those words. Lord John Russell was disposed to relieve the Dissenter from the pain and humiliation of being a party to a religious service which he conscientiously disapproved; and he proposed to open their own chapels freely to the body for the performance of the ceremony of marriage. But he did not see, till the rejection of his measure by the Dissenters

pointed out the fact to him, that it was an infringement of religious liberty to render the Dissenters dependent on the Church for the publication of their banns, and the declaration of that procedure by the clergyman. He did not see that it was an encroachment on liberty of conscience to permit marriages to be celebrated only in places of worship, thus perpetuating the modern innovation, injurious to many consciences, of absolutely connecting the civil contract with the religious celebration. On these grounds, and also because they objected to the necessity of affixing the licence in some conspicuous part of their chapels, the Dissenters had rejected Lord John Russell's measure of the session of 1834. Many whose occasions have not led them to a very close study of the application of the principles of religious liberty, called them, as usual, captious. Others, who, like Lord Holland, knew the nonconformists, and recognised their function in the state, received their petitions and statements with respect, and considered them with deference. 'Take care,' said Lord Holland to a brother peer, a few years later, on another question of Dissenters' rights—'take care how you conclude against the nonconformists on any question of religious liberty. I have seen more of them than most men; and I never differed from them without finding myself in the wrong.' In such a temper of honest respect did Sir Robert Peel now look into this case of Dissenters' marriages. He went down to the principle of the matter at once, in which he was as well supported by the lawyers in the House as by the Dissenters out of it. On the principle that the civil contract is the first consideration before the law, and that, even in churches where marriage is regarded as a sacrament, the religious ceremony only arises out of the civil contract, the minister now proposed to establish at once the broad principle of the validity of marriage by purely civil contract. He also offered full liberty to all denominations of Dissenters to marry in their own chapels. It was honourable to the House of Commons that it received this broad measure as it deserved, recognising the truth of its principle. So did the Dissenters also receive it; but, amidst their satisfaction and gratitude, they did not forget their fidelity to their function. They pointed

out that even this bill would not establish equality before the law for men of differing faiths; it still provided one method of marriage for Churchmen and another for Dissenters, and they required liberty of marriage by civil contract to be extended to the whole of society. They also objected, on their own account, to being dependent on the clergy for the registration of their marriages. Lord Eldon's remark on this is: 'The Dissenters are pleased, but they seem not to disguise that they are not satisfied. I take it that the true friends of the Church are neither pleased nor satisfied. As to the Dissenters, it is their nature not to be satisfied, as I can judge from very long experience.' These haughty gentlemen, who regarded the nonconformists as a separate breed, and talked of 'their nature,' seem never to have asked themselves whether they would themselves ever be 'satisfied' to be compelled to marry nowhere but in a Roman Catholic church, or to depend on the Catholic priesthood for the celebration and registration of their marriages. The minister received the representation of the Dissenters with respect and good-will, and saw the force of the objection about the registration by the clergy; or, in case of the civil-contract celebration, by a magistrate who was usually a clergyman. He had it in his mind to bring forward a registration measure of large scope; but he could not do everything at once, and at present could only announce it. On going out of office, shortly after, he committed the whole business to Lord John Russell, by whom that ultimate measure was brought forward the next year, which has happily settled the marriage question. This ultimate measure was brought in together with one for a registration of births, marriages, and deaths; by it, the civil contract becomes all that the state has to do with the celebration of marriage; and it is accomplished through the registration office, while all persons are left free to conduct the religious celebration of marriage according to their own views.

During this extraordinary session, the minister seemed to be inexhaustible—in purposes, in resources, in energy, and, it may be added, in temper. By this time, his political antagonists had begun to admire; and the country was awake. Success and permanence in office

were evidently out of the question still; but all that man could do the minister did to lessen the rancour of parties by uniting them in good objects. His speech upon the malt-tax had manifested great care, knowledge, and industrious research; and now his introduction of a measure for the commutation of tithes impressed his hearers yet more with a sense of these qualities. He hoped to induce a pretty general commutation of tithes, by offering facilities and inducements to such a settlement. His antagonists believed that none but a compulsory commutation would take full effect; and many pronounced any settlement at all of that question an achievement not to be expected of any statesman whatever. This was no occasion of party strife, while it evidently improved the minister's position. He had caused the reappointment of all the committees of the preceding session, which had for their object the investigation into needs and abuses; and it was clear to all by this time that he had no intention of meddling with any questions on which the mind of parliament had been declared, and its legislation settled. With regard to other matters, as well as education in Ireland, and the incipient plan for England and Wales, he declared his principle to be to acquiesce in what had been deliberately decided on, and to endeavour faithfully to carry out the purposes of the legislature.

One of the first acts of the ministry had been to issue a commission to inquire into the evils which had arisen from the old ecclesiastical arrangements, now outgrown, about the territorial divisions, income, and patronage of the Church. Already the commission were in waiting with their report, which was presented on the 19th of March. A new arrangement of dioceses was proposed, and the erection of two new bishoprics—those of Manchester and Ripon; while, on the other hand, the sees of Bangor and St. Asaph might be united, and also those of Llandaff and Bristol. An equalisation of great church incomes, and a fairer distribution of work and salaries, were also proposed. About the same time, the attorney-general gave notice of a bill to amend the discipline of the Church of England; and he also renewed a measure for the improvement of the administration of ecclesiastical law,

which had been originated under the Duke of Wellington's former ministry, and adopted by the Whigs in their act of issuing a commission. There was much disputation as to which party ought to enjoy the credit of these proceedings; for it was not yet clear to all who were in high places that a time was come when, by a law of necessity, men must make a common stock of statesmanship—must unite their wisdom for the general good—and be satisfied with the honour and blessing of having originated, or of having carried through, good measures, with all procurable assistance from every quarter, without insisting on that glory of a more ancient statesmanship, in which the people had little or no part—of being responsible for the whole conception, preparation, and execution of a new act of policy. Our successive ministers and their parties were, for a series of years, incessantly complaining of each other for taking up and carrying good measures which they did not originate; but what would they deserve as ministers if they avoided taking up and carrying good measures because they did not originate them? Ours are not times when men can say: 'That is my bit of truth, and you shall not have it'—'That is my bit of usefulness, and you shall not touch it.' The truth and the usefulness become, under a faithful representative system, as free as the light and the air. The real glory is in effectually dispensing them—a work in which every political benefactor we have is more or less concerned with some predecessor; and if, in the midst of such work, any man's heart is really set upon his due of praise for his precise share in the suggestion and management, it might be easy to ascertain that precise share. The difficulty would be to make anybody care to know what it was. Amidst the prevalence of the charges all round of borrowing or stealing political measures, the people are quietly drawing their inferences; surely distinguishing the makeshift politician who catches at a popular cry, takes up in a slovenly way what is suggested to him, and offers it without improvement or adaptation, from the true statesman, who, amidst many mistakes of his opponents, sees here and there a good embryo measure, reflects upon and expands it, collects all needful knowledge about it, imbues

it with originality and life, clothes it with a proper organisation, and produces it in his day of power, acknowledging whence he derived it, but secretly conscious that but for him it would never have been thus matured. Such has been the process, so repeatedly and so conspicuously of late years, on our platform of government, that men in high places have begun to understand it like the crowd below; and we hear less complaint with every change of government, of a borrowing or stealing of the thoughts of rivals; but, during the short Peel administration of 1835, such complaints were abundant, and very bitter.

This short administration was now approaching its close. On the twenty-fourth of March, the minister was outvoted about the functions of a committee to inquire into a charge of intimidation at the late Chatham election, by an officer in command there. On the 26th, another defeat was sustained on the question of the London University charter. The grounds of proceeding about this charter had been examined by the privy-council; and, during the period of Whig government, nothing had been done about it; while Oxford and Cambridge had petitioned against any permission to the London University to grant degrees of the same denominations as those of the ancient universities—not objecting, as they declared, to the grant of a charter, or the power of conferring academical honours, but desiring to keep appropriate to themselves the titles of honour which should prove that those who bore them belonged to the Established Church, and had graduated at Oxford or Cambridge. The motion on the present occasion was for an address to the king, beseeching him to grant such a charter to the London University as was approved by the law-officers of the crown in 1831, and containing no other restriction than against conferring degrees in divinity and in medicine. The proposers declared, on being questioned, that the reason why they brought forward this motion now was that they had no longer the hope which existed in the days of a Liberal government, of the admission of Dissenters to the old universities; and if such admission could not be obtained, they must seek for justice in the social career by acquiring such privileges as could be had

for the one university which was open to them. The government amendment was one which did no credit to anybody concerned in it, and was, perhaps, the most damaging act of Sir Robert Peel's short term of office. It was of an obstructive character which could not be mistaken —addressing the king for copies of the memorials presented against the project of a charter, together with an account of the proceedings before the privy-council. This was practically a reverting to the old wrong of considering the Dissenters an inferior and disgraced body, and excluding them from any fair chance in professional life; and the wrong was too flagrant for the times, strong as was the spirit of bigotry, and the habit of prejudice among the classes from which the legislature is selected. The time was come when either the old universities must throw their gates wide to Dissenters, or they must abstain from interference with that honourable and conscientious body —withheld by honour and conscience from winning university privileges—in obtaining justice by another mode. The government was left in a minority of 136 to 246. The king's reply to the address was gracious; but for several months after the return of the Whigs to power, nothing more was heard of the matter. By the next August, the pressure of the government by the council had become such as to procure a proposal which was at once accepted by all the parties concerned in the university—that a body of men of science and scholarship should be incorporated by charter in London, for the purpose of examining candidates and conferring degrees in arts, medicine, and laws on not only students educated in the one college in question, but in others in London, now specified, and also some in the country to be afterwards recognised. This satisfied all reasonable persons. The Dissenters desired justice, and not a monopoly; and the proposed extension conferred dignity, while securing enlarged usefulness. On the 28th of November 1836, two charters were granted—one to constitute the University of London, hitherto so called, 'University College, London,' for 'the general advancement of literature and science, by affording to young men adequate opportunities of obtaining literary and scientific education at a moderate expense'—the other charter creat-

ing the 'University of London.' The proceeding, however, bore the ordinary character of the executive acts of the Whigs; it was imperfect, if not illegal—the instrument bearing the words, without qualification, 'during royal will and pleasure.' These words doomed the charter to expire within six months after the death of William IV. Queen Victoria, as advised, revoked it, and granted a new one on a better tenure, which received the great seal on the 27th of December 1837. In this charter the object is declared to be to hold out the encouragements of the institution 'without any distinction whatsoever;' a declaration so clear as deeply to discredit an attempt made in the next year to introduce, in the form of optional discipline, a test which should establish 'distinctions' on account of differing modes of faith. It was Dr. Arnold who tried the unhappy experiment; and he failed, as the best-intentioned man must do who attempts to force his personal convictions on a public institution, in opposition to its leading principle, and the express terms of its charter. The university remains equal in its operations to all, on the broad ground of the equal rights of all, without fear or favour, to liberty of opinion.

To return to the last nights of the Peel administration. There was a recurrence of party conflict at every practicable interval—the opposition leaders reproaching Sir R. Peel with perilling the prerogatives of the crown, and troubling the course of legislation, by attempting to govern without a majority in the Commons; and Sir R. Peel inviting a vote of want of confidence as a ground, and as the only ground, on which he would be willing to retire before having laid all his measures before the House. Lord John Russell replied that such a vote could not be called for before the production of the ministerial measures, without subjecting the opposition to the charge of unfairness; the obvious reply to which was, that if the opposition intended to wait for the ministerial measures before voting want of confidence, they ought to abstain from invidious remark and construction in the meantime. The opposition—those among them who were not leaders—acknowledged the truth of this, but gave an intimation that the opposition would choose their own time. After

two or three weeks of such antagonism as this, the Whigs chose their opportunity. Their topic was the appropriation question; their time, the 30th of March.

On the 2nd of March, Lord John Russell had intimated that he should bring forward the whole subject of the Irish Church in the latter part of the month, in order to test the position of the ministry with regard to the country. He waited till then for the reports of the commission. A fortnight later, he had doubts of receiving the reports, and declared them not necessary to his argument, but desirable for the satisfaction of members. On the 18th, he suggested that it would be well to wait for a partial report, which would soon be in the hands of members; on the 19th, he fixed his motion, with notice of a call of the House, for the 30th; and on the 20th, he formally relinquished every kind of demand of reports, because none would be ready, and he must proceed without them. The 30th, now, was to be the great day of assertion of the distinctive principle of the Whig government, which was to serve as a test of the power of the existing administration, and as the instrument of their overthrow—the distinctive principle at that period, but not for long; for it was dropped presently after the return of the Whigs to power, and has never been heard of from them since. The conflict now under notice cannot be judged of without the retrospective light cast on it by this fact.

There had been an introductory debate on the ministerial resolutions which proposed to convert Irish tithe into a rent-charge, redeemable under such conditions as should secure the redemption; and in this debate the opposition were divided—some objecting to the measure, and others complaining that it was a mere reproduction of the last Whig measure on the same subject; some desiring to proceed, and others thinking it essential to have the decision of the House on the appropriation question first. In consequence of these differences, the ministers carried their resolution. On the 30th, Lord John Russell repeated his proposition that the House should resolve itself into a committee for the purpose of considering the state of the Irish Church, with a view to applying any surplus left

over from spiritual objects to the education of the people at large, without distinction of religious persuasion. He declared himself friendly to the principle of an establishment; adopted the ground of utility laid down by Paley; showed that the Irish Church did not fulfil the condition, and must therefore be reformed; that, in this case, reform involved reduction, and a reduction involved a surplus; and that, as to the application of this surplus, no distinct line of religious appropriation could be drawn between making additions to the incomes of individual clergymen, and developing the mental and moral capacities of the inhabitants of the country. It was necessary to advert to the difficulty which the opposition leaders found themselves in through the delay of the commissioners' report. Last year, they had voted down the appropriation question, on the ground that the requisite information could be obtained only by the inquiry of the commissioners, and yet they were now bringing up the question again, without waiting for the results of the inquiry. The facts on which the question was based were indeed patent enough; and so had they been the year before, and every year of the century; but Lord J. Russell rested his excuse for his inconsistency on the broad declaration of the premier, that under no circumstances would he consent to the appropriation of ecclesiastical funds to any but strictly ecclesiastical purposes. Such a declaration, prior to the reception of the reports, justified the opposition, in their own opinion, in declaring their principle in a manner equally broad. Another consideration, adverse to delay, was, that it was highly desirable to come to some vote, or other decision, which should show whether or not the administration enjoyed the confidence of the House.

Lord Howick's speech was perhaps the most interesting, on the side of the reformers, delivered during the four nights of this important debate. He lamented that this question was made the test of the stability of the administration, because he believed that the abrupt overthrow of the ministry would be extremely disastrous to Ireland, as protracting the unsettlement of the tithe question, and causing a confusion which no succeeding government could remedy. For his own part, he would have been glad to

have been spared the necessity of declaring his views at such a juncture; but, being called upon to avow his opinion on the one side or the other, he was compelled to declare himself in favour of the principle of appropriation; and this he did in the most thorough and manly manner. Sir Robert Peel's speech was what might have been expected from the training of his life, though far from what could be desired from the prime-minister of the empire. He dwelt upon the compact with the Church in the Act of Union with Ireland; admitted that there were circumstances under which all compacts must be broken, as there were circumstances under which constitutions themselves must be dissolved; but he insisted on proof to demonstration that such moral sacrifices were inevitable before they could be deliberated upon; he denied that any proof of the kind had been offered in the present case, and declared his disbelief that any such could be produced. He insisted that before any convulsive proceeding could be honestly proposed, the innovators should be prepared with a comprehensive and complete new policy to supersede the existing compact; he was justified in asserting, after repeated challenges to his opponents, that no such scheme was prepared; and therefore, though he might be compelled to succumb to an adverse vote, he should ever condemn the procedure of procuring that vote at the expense of the Irish Church, rather than by means of a direct motion of want of confidence in the government. He believed that, on this question, the House was not an expression of national opinion; he believed that his view was that of the large majority of the people; and he therefore felt strong to meet the decision that might ensue from his adherence to his view of duty to the Irish Church. The whole speech proceeded on the assumption that the motion involved the virtual overthrow of the Irish Church and a consequent convulsion; an assumption which the reformers reasonably denied; but an analysis of the division seems to show that, with regard to the state of national opinion, the minister was right. Sound as was the appropriation principle, in the view of the soundest thinkers of the time, it was not one which interested the general mind; and it was not long before the Whig leaders

had to make bitter complaints of the indifference of the people to it. It is much to be wished that the continued existence of the Peel administration of 1835 had been put upon some other issue. The resolutions in favour of appropriation, proposed by Lord J. Russell, were carried by the Scotch and Irish members; the English leaving the motion in a minority of nine. Of the Scotch members 32 were in favour of it, and 17 against it. Of the Irish members, 64 voted with the opposition, and 37 with the government. The majority against ministers was 33, in a House of 611 members. The division took place at three o'clock in the morning of the 3rd of April.

In committee, Lord J. Russell moved a resolution, that no measure on the subject of tithes in Ireland could succeed which did not embody the appropriation principle; and he obtained a majority of 27. This was on the 7th of April. On the 8th, Sir R. Peel announced the resignation of the cabinet. He avowed that it was with great reluctance that he retired, because his government, supported by the full confidence of the king, and by great moral strength in the country, could, as he and his colleagues believed, have speedily settled some public questions, especially that of Irish tithes, which required immediate adjustment, but must now be cast adrift. But they considered that, on the whole, it would be more hurtful still to the public service to continue the attempt to govern the country, unsupported by the confidence of the House of Commons; a confidence which, as was shown by four impressive defeats, they did not possess. There was, as Sir Robert Peel must have known, no need of protestations of personal disinterestedness; for the whole temper and conduct of the minister during the last five months had been a consistent silent assertion of right feelings, as well as of the most eminent ability. Every one knew that he had had no option about undertaking office; and every one felt and said that he had failed only because parties had been, as yet, too strong for him. The opposition had gained nothing, during the interval, in general estimation, while he had gained as much as was possible in the time. At this day, there are many who avow that thick mists of prejudice dissolved from before their minds in the course

of these five months; and that they now for the first time began to apprehend the character and appreciate the powers of Sir Robert Peel—a character so peculiar as to require a long observation to obtain a true view of it; and powers which had not, even yet, fully revealed themselves to those who knew him best.

The cheering of the whole House at the conclusion of his speech was long in subsiding. When anything else could be heard, Lord J. Russell said that 'he did not wish to make any comment on what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman, except to express his opinion that the right honourable gentleman had acted entirely in the spirit of the constitution.'

Now, then, the reformers were to have another trial with the king and the country.

CHAPTER II.

Difficulties—The Melbourne Administration—Lord Melbourne—Mr. Charles Grant—Lord John Russell—Irish Administration—Two Great Questions—The Irish Church—Appropriation Question—Church Rates—Surrender of the Appropriation Principle.

THERE was an interval of ten days before the king and country could feel that there was a government to rely on. It was a season of anxious expectation to all; but few were aware how many and how serious were the causes of anxiety.

The king sent first for Lord Grey, who declined office, but gave his best advice—which was to send for Lord Melbourne. Thus, the character of the administration might certainly be anticipated; but what were they to do? By choosing the Irish Church question for the overthrow of the Peel administration, the Whigs had pledged themselves to carry the appropriation principle into practice without delay—even in connection with the pressing affair of the tithes; whereas the king was not only understood to be opposed to any innovations upon the privileges of the

Church, but was remembered to have spontaneously and eagerly pledged himself to the bishops to resist all such innovations. Again, their present victory had been gained by means of the Irish members, who might and would fairly presume upon the fact and who must be specially considered in the impending legislation for Ireland; whereas O'Connell had recently been pledging himself, in the hearing of all the world, to obtain organic changes of the greatest importance; and, in the first place, a reform of the House of Lords as sweeping as that of the Commons; and, as usual, he promised a speedy repeal of the union. Again, the Whigs had not among them any man of very eminent ability in statesmanship, while many were sufficiently distinguished for talent to be entitled each to set up for himself in regard to the work of his own department. In such a case, the absence of any controlling or harmonising mind—of any mind which could be truly called that of a statesman—was fatal to all chance of firm and effective rule. Thus it appeared to the most thoughtful people throughout the country, who, remembering how the last Whig administration had disappointed expectation, considered the present prospect to be anything but exhilarating. The king could not have forgotten these facts, either; nor his alarm at the promised passage of political arms between Lords Brougham and Durham in the winter, from which, but for the intervention of the Peel ministry, might have arisen a new struggle between the halting and the advancing reformers. Such a struggle might now probably be expected; for the whole country was aware that the radical reform party must become of importance, both as stimulus and support to the Whigs, who were almost powerless without them. It was believed to be an earnest wish of the king's that such a conflict of liberal parties and leaders should be avoided; and that it was a positive stipulation of his that Lord Brougham should not return to the woolsack. Lord Durham's health did not permit of his taking office at home, though it did not interfere with his filling a diplomatic function abroad. So we soon find him in the honourable post of ambassador to Russia. The great seal was for some time in commission, either from the difficulty of finding a chancellor, or from

the danger of making an enemy of Lord Brougham, who was one of the perplexities of the crisis. It had been found impossible to act with him; but it was dangerous and painful to have him for an enemy. If there was any alternative besides these, it was not found. He presently came out broadly in the character of an enemy; and even Lord Melbourne's good humour and indifference were insufficient to bear up his temper, courage, and spirits, under the hostility of his former colleague—unremitting and bitter as it was, and protracted from session to session—not a little affecting, as we shall see, the political action of the time.

The country was aware of this complication of difficulties; the king felt it keenly—the new ministers alone seemed undismayed by it. It was their way to be confident; and now they were exulting and gay, though the embarrassment of forming themselves into a government was great. It was the 8th of April when Sir R. Peel and the Duke of Wellington announced their relinquishment of office; and it was not till the 18th, after repeated adjournments of the Commons, that the new administration was declared to be completed. Lord Melbourne was the premier; and in his announcement to the Lords, he spoke of the difficulties of the government as 'great and arduous—many, indeed, of a peculiar and severe kind.' Lord Melbourne, however, was understood to be more teased than dismayed by difficulties. He felt more than he chose to show; for it was his chief fault to affect a *poco-curante* character of mind, unworthy of his sound sense, his actual diligence, and his disinterested love of his country. His patriotism took the form of a love of peace and quiet for society; and that love of peace and quiet proceeded, in a great degree, from the speculative character of his intellect. His views were too comprehensive and too abstract to permit him to perceive the importance of particular questions and particular acts, or to engage his sympathies in temporary occasions, when other men were ardent and resolute. He was not one who would ever stimulate the public mind, or concentrate its energies on prominent ideas or definite enterprises. When occasions arose, he regarded them with philosophy, with sincerity, and with much of the

ripe wisdom of the scholar and the gentleman; and if compelled to act, he acted with diligence and decision; but he waited for them to arise, and conceived that it was his business to do so. He was out of his place as the head of a reforming administration, from his inability to originate, and his indisposition to guide. In his function at the home office, he had done extremely well. His benign contempt and philosophical compassion for the ignorant herd had made him a calm and merciful ruler of the restless and untoward; while his good sense and sincerity, with his love of public tranquillity, had made him diligent and watchful in anticipation of disturbance. His conduct at the time of the demonstration of the unions on behalf of the Dorsetshire labourers was admirable; and it is understood that this passage of his political life so recommended and endeared him to the king as to make the present transition of power easier than it could otherwise have been. There had not yet been opportunity for the world to become fully acquainted with his great and fatal fault—fatal at such a crisis of the national mind and fortunes—his affectation of scepticism and *poco-curanteism*. At a time when earnestness was the first requisite in the *chef* of a reforming administration, the want of it would have been a deadly sin; and the affectation of the want was a moral offence. Unapt for combination, incapable of effective organisation, as his colleagues were, his assumed indolence and indifference went to increase the evil, and may be considered one of the causes of their failure to govern the country well. He might consider it amusing to perplex and astonish deputations and single applicants by his extraordinary manners during interviews; but his pranks were of more serious consequence than he supposed, at a time when the people were in earnest, and believed that they had a government to which they might refer their cause. It was very well for him to look philosophically from a window of the home office upon the 30,000 unionists who came to intimidate him—and some few, as he was aware, with the idea of taking his life; but it was a different thing to appear absorbed in blowing a feather, or nursing a sofa-cushion, when giving audience about the abolition of the punishment of

death, or receiving a report on criminal law reform, in preparation for the debate of the night. It was a serious thing to send for a philosopher, to offer him a pension, and begin the interview with the remark that he thought such pensions a great humbug. And it did not mend the matter that, on one occasion which leaves the deepest blot upon his name—one occasion which forms an exception to the general kindliness and philosophy of his temper and demeanour—he showed that he really could and did feel in an intensity of party-feeling. In the next reign, he had mournful occasion to write two letters to the mother of Lady Flora Hastings; and then he was hard and ungentlemanly, even cruel, to a degree which deprived him of that reputation for superiority to emotion for which he strove by the affectation of a life. As yet, when he assumed the premiership in 1835, neither his failings nor his sterling merits were fully known. He was held in general respect and trust, without exciting any high expectation; but it was not long afterwards that the good-humoured and scarcely burlesque character of him given by Sydney Smith, in his second letter to Archdeacon Singleton, was laughingly recognised as a capital likeness. The subject and the caricaturist are both gone now, and a solemnity is cast over the mirth of the time; but there is enough of truth and of serious appreciation in the sketch to make it valuable as a permanent illustration. 'Viscount Melbourne,' says Sydney Smith, 'declared himself quite satisfied with the Church as it is; but if the public had any desire to alter it, they might do as they pleased. He might have said the same thing of the monarchy, or of any other of our institutions; and there is in the declaration a permissiveness and good-humour which in public men has seldom been exceeded. Carelessness, however, is but a poor imitation of genius; and the formation of a wise and well-reflected plan of reform conduces more to the lasting fame of a minister than that affected contempt of duty which every man sees to be mere vanity, and a vanity of no very high description. But, if the truth must be told, our viscount is somewhat of an impostor. Everything about him seems to betoken careless desolation; any one would suppose from his manner that he was playing at

chuck-farthing with human happiness; that he was always on the heel of pastime; that he would giggle away the great charter, and decide by the method of teetotum whether my lords the bishops should or should not retain their seats in the House of Lords.' All this is the mere vanity of surprising, and making us believe that he can play with kingdoms as other men can with ninepins. Instead of this lofty nebulo, this miracle of moral and intellectual felicities, he is nothing more than a sensible honest man, who means to do his duty to the sovereign and to the country. Instead of being the ignorant man he pretends to be, before he meets the deputation of tallow-chandlers in the morning, he sits up half the night talking with Thomas Young about melting and skimming, and then, though he has acquired knowledge enough to work off a whole vat of prime Leicester tallow, he pretends next morning not to know the difference between a dip and a mould. In the same way, when he has been employed in reading acts of parliament, he would persuade you that he has been reading *Cleghorn on the Beatitudes*, or *Pickler on the Nine Difficult Points*. Neither can I allow to this minister, however he may be irritated by the denial, the extreme merit of indifference to the consequences of his measures. I believe him to be conscientiously alive to the good or evil that he is doing, and that his caution has more than once arrested the gigantic projects of the Lycurgus of the Lower House. I am sorry to hurt any man's feelings, and to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gaiety he has reared; but I accuse our minister of honesty and diligence: I deny that he is careless or rash; he is nothing more than a man of good understanding, and good principle, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political *roué*.'

There was another *poco-curante* minister in the cabinet, though it might be felt that one was enough. Mr. Charles Grant, afterwards Lord Glenelg, was colonial secretary; and events were at hand which made his post as important as any in the cabinet. He was regarded with universal good-will for his quiet steadiness in the advocacy of liberal principles; and he was respected as a man of large information and clear sagacity. But his indolence was

extreme; an indolence which was so thoroughly constitutional as to be inveterate; and he naturally failed in an office which requires the powers of more than one man to fulfil its duties, be his energy what it may. To make up for these lovers of ease, there were half-a-dozen men whose activity, in one form or another, nobody could question—Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Lord Howick, Mr. Spring Rice, Lord Duncannon, and Mr. Poulett Thomson. As for Lord Palmerston, 'the world was all before him where to choose' to make England felt and talked about, for good or for evil. 'Perfidious Albion' was sure to be the world's topic while he was in power. Lord John Russell was now to show—and the nation was truly anxious to learn—whether his activity would now be measured and sustained under the responsibility of having wrested the government out of the hands of other men, and taken it into the grasp of himself and his friends, instead of requiring, as before, to be kept up by the pressure of deputations, and demands from without. He had to show whether he could originate as well as persist, and whether his persistence could hold out to the point of success. He had to show whether he could keep in check his rash courage and self-confidence, learn to abstain from prophecy and pledge, perceive that he could be, and often was mistaken, and leave off making declarations during the parliamentary recess which the next session compelled him to stultify. No one doubted his readiness to undertake: the question was what he could accomplish. No one doubted his courage: the question was of his ultimate efficiency. No one doubted his patriotism: the question was of its scope and enlightenment. No one doubted his cleverness: the question was whether he had enough of philosophy, candour, and sustained energy, to raise his cleverness into statesmanship. No one looked to him for originality—for the genius of statesmanship: if he had had it, it must have appeared before this time; but of the secondary order of statesmanship, the ability which can appropriate, and organise, and vivify the floating wisdom of the political world, and make it a ruling power, he might yet show himself capable. He had now a fair field; and that his own expectations were sanguine was shown

by his determination to obtain power, and his exultation in having obtained it. Lord Howick went to the war office, with a high reputation for honesty, diligence, and courage, and a fair one for ability, to begin with. Mr. Spring Rice, smart and good-humoured, but not yet distinguished for financial wisdom, became chancellor of the exchequer; an appointment which the critical Sydney Smith thought somewhat rash. 'If,' said he, 'Mr. Spring Rice were to go into holy orders, great would be the joy of the three per cents.' But, as was said before, there is no knowing what kind of chancellor of the exchequer any man will make till he is tried. The merits of Lord Duncannon were not fully appreciated till he went to Ireland, some years afterwards; but the few who now took an interest in the management of the woods and forests department saw that its work was thoroughly well done, with quiet wisdom and strenuous diligence. Mr. Poulett Thomson was the only member of the government admitted from the radical reform party. He was president of the Board of Trade, for which his knowledge and experience and sound economical principles well fitted him. He entered the cabinet on the stipulation that he should have perfect freedom in advocating the repeal of the corn-laws. Ireland was well treated in the apportionment of office. The good-humoured and accomplished Lord Mulgrave, afterwards Lord Normanby, with his demonstrative character and manners, was just the man to engage the admiration and good-will of the impressible Irish; while the benevolent and chivalrous Lord Morpeth, as secretary, and the no less chivalrous Drummond, as under-secretary, with his wisdom, his highly principled diligence, and excellent habits of business, took care that the hard and serious work of the government of Ireland should be duly performed. As the case of Ireland was not yet understood, and the true and permanent principle of her rule had not yet been found, any policy attempted at that time could be but of temporary effect; and it was but a few years before her rulers avowed that their policy—of conciliation—was 'exhausted;' but, as a preparation for a higher system of statesmanship, and a means of getting over the transition from a bad old system to an inde-

terminate new one, it was true, as was said at the time, that Ireland had never been so well governed as during the viceroyalty of Lord Mulgrave. As for the rest—Lord Lansdowne was president of the council; Lord Auckland went to the admiralty; Lord Holland was chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and Sir J. C. Hobhouse was at the head of the India Board.

The new ministers pledged themselves to two great measures as the principal work of the remainder of the session—municipal reform, and the settlement of the Irish Church. The Irish Church question was, at the moment and on principle, the most important of any question of the time, not only because it had broken up two administrations, but because it involved the principle for whose sake the Whigs now possessed themselves of office, and by which, therefore, they were pledged to stand or fall.

On the 26th of June, Lord Morpeth brought forward the ministerial measure. He avowed that if the question now were whether or not to establish the Protestant Church in Ireland, no sane man would dream of such an act. But the Church was there, with all its long prescription, and its implication with the civil polity of the empire; and it was not proposed to touch its foundation, or disturb its framework. If it were to endure, however, it must be made a less exasperating spectacle than it was to the bulk of the people among whom it stood. The measure which he brought forward actually consisted, as was presently pointed out by the opposition, of two parts; though the framers considered the two so intimately connected that it was an act of opposition in itself to separate them. The first provided for the conversion of tithe into a rent-charge, in much the same way as in the last two measures proposed—the other provided for the appropriation of the accruing surplus to the religious and moral instruction of all classes of the community, without distinction of religious persuasions. After two readings, the proposal to go into committee was made on the 21st of July, when Sir R. Peel renewed his opposition to the second part of the measure, on the two grounds—that there would be no surplus; and that, if there were, it

would be a breach of faith to the Irish Church to apply its funds out of its own pale, and for any but strictly ecclesiastical purposes. The chancellor of the exchequer stated that the House had decided, after long debates, that the question of appropriation was connected with the concession to the tithe-owners of the £1,000,000 advanced to them in preceding years: he conceived that this precluded the division of the measure into two parts; and he declared the purpose of this partition to be to get rid of the appropriation clause—which was undoubtedly true. Lord Morpeth warned the legislature of the consequences of drawing back from the resolutions recently passed in that House. The Irish were now aware that parliament knew of the parishes vacant of Protestants—of the churches without flocks—of the incomes paid for no service—of the provision for the extension of that Protestantism which was not extending—of the desperate poverty and ignorance of the Catholic peasantry who had hitherto been called upon to pay, instead of to benefit by these funds; and now that these things were admitted—now that the principle of appropriation had been sanctioned by that House—it was too late to recede. On a division, the ministers had a majority of 37—the number being made up, not only by Irish members, but by a majority of 8 among the English and Scotch members. The bill was now safe in the Lower House; and the ministers proceeded to add, in committee, a clause providing for the advance of £50,000, from the consolidated fund, in anticipation of the surplus to accrue, for purposes of general education in Ireland. The reason for this was that there was said to be much exasperation in some Irish parishes, where the new arrangements were not to take effect during the life of the present incumbents; and it was believed that the safety and tranquillity of these clergymen would be promoted by a beginning of the educational expenditure being made at once. The radical reform members opposed the concession of the £1,000,000 advanced as a loan; and the ministers admitted the encroachment on the intentions of the legislature, but pleaded the much more serious evil which would ensue from attempts to recover what was irrecoverable. The bill passed the Commons on the 12th

of August, and was read a second time in the Lords on the 20th. In committee, the Lords struck out all the appropriation clauses, by a majority of 97, in a House of 179. The ministers abandoned the whole bill; and thus the matter stood over till the next year. It was a great evil, in the existing state of the Irish Church; but it was felt to be worth enduring for the sake of the essential principle involved in the measure—a principle by which not only the Whig administration, but the connection of England and Ireland, and the religious liberties of a nation, must ultimately stand or fall. If, three years later, the Whig administration drew back from their obligation to stand or fall by this principle, neither they nor any other human power could alter its relation to the political connection of Ireland, and to the religious liberties of a nation.

The struggle was renewed the next spring. On the 25th of April, Lord Morpeth brought forward the tithe measure, about which the two parties in both Houses would have agreed, if it had stood without the appropriation provision. This last was not brought forward in the express and conspicuous manner of preceding years; but Lord Morpeth gave notice that it was involved inextricably in the bill. As yet, ministers were evidently resolved to stand or fall by it. He was now able to declare that there would certainly be a surplus—he believed of nearly £100,000; but it would not be available for a considerable time. Lord Stanley moved an amendment, consisting of a proposal of the tithe measure, without reference to appropriation. Amidst the general resemblance of the debates in successive years, there are interesting divergences of topic, and changes of views to be noticed. This year, there were three at least that were remarkable. The opposition had certainly advanced considerably in their estimate of the reforms that were essential to the maintenance of the Irish Church. They spoke more freely of the disgrace of the spectacle of an overpaid and an underpaid clergy within the same area; they were more earnest about equalisation of incomes, and more bold about the prosecution of the needful inquiries. Another most pregnant fact was that Lord

Stanley complained of the cause of disagreement as not practical. What the government stood out for was a mere abstract principle—'a shadow' which they had better give up for 'the substance' of his plan of details; and he implored them to relinquish the pursuit of what was so ineffectual—such a mere idea—and unite with their opponents in coming to practical business. Often as we are compelled to mourn the moral scepticism, the destitution of faith, which is prevalent in the political world, and which is the just ground of the deep disrepute of legislative assemblies, almost universally, it is not often that we meet in Hansard or elsewhere, with so open an avowal as this—that principles are 'the shadow,' and arrangements 'the substance'—that it is not practical for the legislature to resolve, by clear implication, that there is a world of morals above and beyond the law, to which mankind must occasionally resort for the regeneration of their laws. To admit this solemnly and deliberately, in full conclave, with a spectacle of murder and famine before the eyes, and the curses and groans and wailings of a suffering people filling the air, is an unpractical thing for a legislature to do, while they might be busy in ordering a plan of distribution of money—some more here and something less there, the suffering of the multitude remaining untouched. Lord Stanley was so far from understanding that a principle is the most substantial and enduring of realities, that he evidently thought he was speaking loftily and patriotically in making his unphilosophical and degrading appeal. He was sure there would be no surplus; and he supposed that settled the matter of the 'principle' being unpractical.

The third noticeable incident was that the debate turned, for a little while, upon the important point: What is the object of a church establishment—to propagate doctrine, or to enlighten the people by instruction and training? Sir James Graham thought the former; Lord J. Russell, the latter. It was for the former object that the Protestant Church was established in Ireland; and it was to the latter that ministers now desired to overrule it. It was truly a controversy for whose principle any

government might be proud to struggle to the death; but, till now, no express discussion of the principle of a religious establishment seems to have been entered into during the debates of the last few years. The historical fact of the case in question seems to be that the Church in Ireland was established for proselyting purposes; that these purposes failed; that at the date before us, many were unwilling to give up the hope of yet converting the Irish to Protestantism, while, on the other hand, those who saw the hopelessness of such an aspiration, and who neither dared to touch the foundations of the Church in Ireland, nor to let her remain as she was, believed that the only chance for Church and nation was in connecting the Establishment with large and beneficent general objects. The case might have been simplified, and the strife softened, if all parties had spoken out—some admitting the disappointment of their missionary aims, and others acknowledging that they were supplying a wholly new foundation for the Church; but no nearer approach to such frankness was made than by the slight and superficial controversy during the present debate. On this occasion, the ministerial majority was 39—and the bill passed the Commons on the 15th of July.

The lords again threw out the appropriation clauses, passing the rest of the bill, with slight alterations in some clauses regarding stipends. These last gave occasion to Lord J. Russell, and, as he believed, justification, to refuse the amended bill, as sent down, through a breach of privilege—the Lords having interfered with a money bill. The question was one difficult of decision—the question whether this was a breach of privilege or not; and the speaker himself avowed the nicety of the point. At length, the motion for rejecting the altered bill was carried by a majority of 29—and once more, the controversy was adjourned to another year.

In the royal speech, at the opening of the session of 1837, we find a recommendation of the subject of tithes, among others, to the attention of parliament; but the discussion of the topic was intercepted by the death of the king. The argument on the principle of appropriation may, however, be observed proceeding, under other terms,

throughout the discussion on the measure of the chancellor of the exchequer for the solution of the question of church-rates. The temper of parties interested in church questions was at this time bitter in the extreme. Lord Lyndhurst had made use of an expression about the Irish Catholics, haughty, hard, and unpatriotic, but still by no means conveying, when taken with its context, the full import which was attributed to it. He called the Irish Catholics 'aliens in blood, in language, and in religion.' This language was naturally seized upon by the Irish agitators, and reprobated by the English Liberals who were authenticating, in every possible way, a conciliatory policy in Ireland. A striking scene took place in the House of Commons, late one February night, when Lord Lyndhurst was seen sitting under the gallery, and Mr. Sheil was speaking. On Mr. Sheil's use of the word 'alien,' uttered with the strongest emphasis, the cheering from the Liberal side of the House broke forth, and continued till it rose almost to a confusion of yells. The members appear to have had no compassion for a man sitting by to hear such reprobation, while prevented from explaining and remonstrating. Never was man more abundantly punished for an insolent expression; and the worst part of the punishment must have been the seeing daily, in all companies and in every newspaper, the words assumed to mean much more than he had intended them to convey, both from the temper in which they were quoted, and from their being separated from his argument. Then there was O'Connell's National Association, threatening and boastful; then there were the bishops meeting at Lambeth, on the first announcement of the ministerial church-rate measure, to prepare a declaration against it before it was brought before them as legislators; and there were the ministers vehemently resenting this method of opposition; and there were legislators and constituencies debating the question of the exclusion of the bishops from parliament. The times were indeed bitter and angry; and the appropriation question was hardly likely to fare better than in preceding years.

The chancellor of the exchequer showed that something must be done to amend the unquiet and disgraceful state

of things that existed in relation to the payment of church-rates. While the rate was voted by the vestries, and the vestries were composed of persons of every variety of faith, it was clear that the obtaining of a rate at all depended on the agreement of parties who had for a long time been disagreeing more and more. If the rate were refused, there were no means of obtaining it; and, in point of fact, church-rates had ceased in Sheffield since 1818; and in Manchester, none had been levied since the beginning of the contest in 1833. It was not for a member of the government to give a full report of the reasons of the Dissenters for refusing to pay church-rates; and Mr. Spring Rice did not attempt it; but there was nobody in the House who was not aware that opulent men, to whom time and trouble were of more account than money, had undergone toil and vexation to a great extent rather than pay very small sums for church-rates; and that several persons of high respectability had gone to prison in the cause. Many who paid tithes, without dispute, though unwillingly—paid tithes because the payment was a charge involved in the purchase of their land—refused to pay church rates, having good legal assurance that they were not a legal charge, and being conscientiously reluctant to contribute, except under a clear legal obligation, to the maintenance of the places and forms of a worship which they disapproved. The proposal of the government was to place church lands under management which should cause them to yield more than at present; and from the improved income to pay church-rates, and then hand over the surplus to the ecclesiastical commissioners. The Church and Conservatism smelt a savour of the appropriation principle in this plan, and they resisted it accordingly. They could not say, indeed, that the surplus was to be appropriated to other than ecclesiastical purposes; but they complained that it would intercept the Dissenters' money; and declared that the Church was entitled to all increase of income from her own possessions, and to the Dissenters' contributions too. Therefore it was that fifteen bishops assembled at Lambeth, and the Archbishop of Canterbury delivered his protest against the ministerial measure before it had left the Commons; and the chan-

cellor of the exchequer carried his measure in the Lower House by a majority of only five. This was a virtual defeat, and the ministers dropped the bill, which they had put forth as the leading measure of the session. On the 12th of June, Lord John Russell moved for a committee to inquire into the management of church lands, with a view to the improvement of their revenues. He declared that this had no connection whatever with the principle of appropriation; but the Church and the Conservatives believed that it had, and they exerted themselves against it accordingly. Three divisions took place on this occasion which show the temper of the House on the question of Church property. A direct proposal on the part of a radical reform member, Mr. Harvey, for the abolition of church-rates, was voted down by a majority of 431—only 58 members voting for the motion. Lord J. Russell's motion obtained a majority of 86 in favour of an inquiry into the management of church lands. Mr. Goulburn proposed an addition of a pledge from parliament that any new funds accruing from improved management should be applied to the extension of religious instruction by the clergy to the members of the Established Church alone; and the ministerial majority against the motion was now only 26. From this it appeared that the Church would accept of any improvement of her own revenues, but would neither forego funds derived from the Dissenters, nor extend her expenditure beyond her own members.

Thus stood the matter when the elections took place, after the death of the king. The Church question was the leading one on the hustings; and, though the appropriation question was that by which the ministers had turned out their predecessors, and by which they were pledged to stand or fall, the ministerial majority in parliament was sensibly lessened in the new House. The government were discouraged accordingly, and they began to draw back from their pledge—no doubt, from relaxing in their sense of being pledged on behalf of the appropriation principle; and the result was seen in the next session, in a way fatal to their political honour.

On the 27th of March 1838, Sir R. Peel inquired of Lord J. Russell what course he meant to pursue with

regard to Irish tithe; and whether he intended to bring forward the appropriation question again, in accordance with the resolutions of 1835. The reply was that the ministers intended to place the tithe question 'on a ground altogether new,' as it appeared useless and irritating, after a conflict of four years, to prolong an argument which produced no result. This announcement, unaccompanied by any hint now of standing or falling by the great principle by which the government had come into office, prepared Sir R. Peel and the Church party for their approaching triumph over the honour of their opponents —the most mournful of triumphs. The estimate of that honour was already so low that men of every party in the House declared, a few weeks afterwards, that they perceived—some with fear and some with hope—that they saw the appropriation principle lurking amidst the ambiguities of Lord J. Russell's new resolutions on the tithe question; ambiguities which were themselves discreditable on an occasion which was professed to be a decisive one.

On the 14th of May, Sir Thomas Acland moved the rescinding of the celebrated resolutions of the House, of April 1835, in favour of the appropriation question; and then broke out Sir R. Peel's emotions of triumph. He told the whole story: how he offered to carry a tithe measure like the present, and was taunted with having derived it from the preceding government; how he was compelled to retire, because such a measure must, on principle, as his opponents said, be connected with appropriation clauses; how those opponents staked their political existence on such a connection; and how they were now proposing to carry the tithe measure, after all, without the appropriation; introducing it by resolutions so ambiguously worded that no one could be sure of what they meant. The true reply would have been that the ministers, finding that they could not stand by their principle, were ready to fall by it; that they had been mistaken about the interest of the public mind in the question, and would accept the consequences of their mistake; and that, having faith in their principle, the only thing impossible to them was to surrender it. Their actual reply was that their convictions on the question were unaltered; but that they surrendered

the principle. Sir Thomas Acland's motion for rescinding the memorable resolutions was lost by a majority of only 19. When the time arrived for the tithe debate—the 2nd of July—the appropriation question was once more brought forward by one who had never wavered upon it, and who was universally admitted to be, from his early action and steady advocacy, the highest authority on the subject—Mr. Ward. He, too, told the old story over again; and the effect was withering upon the reputation of the ministers. Referring to a pamphlet which, in 1835, had foretold that Sir R. Peel must go out upon this question, he said: 'The right honourable baronet adhered to his opinions, sacrificed place and power to his opinions, and ceased to be a minister; but they must have a new edition of the pamphlet to tell them how those who rose into power upon the right honourable baronet's fall could now adopt his opinions, and make them their rule upon this occasion, and do so without the sacrifice of character and station.' The only minister who offered any reply to Mr. Ward was Lord Morpeth; and he made no reference to the main point of the difficulty. He dwelt upon the courage and perseverance of ministers in having three times asserted their principle, and on their prudence and love of peace shown in dropping it now; but he said nothing of any obligation to resign. Mr. Ward's motion was, of course, lost by a large majority—the ministers themselves voting against it. But his speech was not lost; and it has probably not yet fulfilled all its purposes. A principle may be trodden down; but it can never be extinguished. When the one in question revives, and men turn back to the history of the struggle, they may take warning and guidance from the record. While studying it, they will pause upon the words of another highly principled member, Mr. Grote, who said, in regard to this transaction, that it afforded melancholy proof of the way in which great principles were made subservient to party purposes; and that he believed history would note this as one of the most discreditable instances of tergiversation on record. The Whig government now evinced a moral scepticism equal to that of Sir James Graham on the same subject. They praised their own 'wisdom'

in not sacrificing the substance to the shadow, and their devotion to the general good in surrendering a principle which was found not to be generally appreciated.

It is true, the principle was not generally appreciated; and government was not duly supported in upholding it; but not the less for this were the ministers lowered in the estimation of the nation at large. It might be only the thoughtful, and those familiarised with the philosophy of society, who saw the whole scope of the controversy, and were interested in it accordingly; but all could see—and most did see—that the Whig ministry did not govern the people, but was governed by them, and took, not merely suggestion and stimulus from the popular will, but guidance and control. There was less demonstration of disapprobation at the moment than earnest men hoped, and perhaps than the ministers feared; but they never recovered a high position in the respect and confidence of the country.

Such is the history of the appropriation question which determined the return of the Whigs to power in 1835.

CHAPTER III.

Second Great Question—Municipal Reform—Corporation Commission—Rise and History of Municipal Institutions—Report of Commissioners—Existing State of Things—Principle of the Case—Defects of the Reform—Substance of the Bill—The Bill in the Commons—In the Lords—it becomes Law.

ON their return to power, in April 1835, the Whig ministers had, as we have seen, promised two leading measures during the session. We have pursued the history of one. The other is the large and just measure which, next to reform of parliament, is their chief title to honourable remembrance. It was during the session of 1835 that the Municipal Reform Bill was carried.

This measure could not precede parliamentary reform; but it was sure to follow it. It could not precede parlia-

mentary reform, because a large proportion of members were sent by the corrupt boroughs, where corporation abuses were the most flagrant; and to attack those abuses was to attack parliamentary corruption itself, in the presence of the delegates of that corruption. Every borough proprietor and delegate would stand up for his own borough corporation, aided by others to whom he would render a similar service in their hour of need. And the people would not have borne to see the most insignificant boroughs —those which had no parliamentary representation— called to account and laid under discipline, while the great parliamentary towns were passed over. So it was necessary to purge parliament first of the close-borough class of members before the corporations could be exposed, though the evil of municipal corruption had become well-nigh intolerable for a long course of years. It was not merely the corruption of the old municipal bodies which made their reform a necessary consequence of the regeneration of parliament; it was also that the people were resolved to possess and use the rights of the franchise provided for them by the Reform Bill, but intercepted by the oppressive maladministration of the borough corporations. The franchise was of little use in a town where the corporate officers elected and re-elected themselves and each other for ever, and employed the trust-funds which should have healed the sick, and sheltered the old, and instructed the young, in bribing a depraved class of electors; where the town-clerks were nominated by the patrons of boroughs, to countenance electoral subserviency, and do the dirty work of venal electioneering; and where the efforts of honest electors might be neutralised through the public-houses alone, if there were no other way—the publicans being dependent for their licences upon justices of the peace, who had, as a body, no relish whatever for freedom of parliament. Such a state of things could not be tolerated by the men who had won the Reform Bill, with the intention of using it; and the authors of the Reform Bill were gratefully supported by the majority of the middle classes in their first movement in 1833, and their prosecution of the enterprise on their return to power in 1835.

The first move was the appointment of a commission under the great seal to twenty gentlemen, whose charge was 'to proceed with the utmost despatch to inquire as to the existing state of the municipal corporations in England and Wales, and to collect information respecting the defects in their constitution: to make inquiry into their jurisdiction and powers, and the administration of justice, and in all other respects; and also into the mode of electing and appointing the members and officers of such corporations, and into the privileges of the freemen and other members thereof, and into the nature and management of the income, revenues, and funds of the said corporations.'

While these twenty gentlemen were about their work, pairing off among the districts into which they had divided England and Wales, how busy were many minds! some with dread of exposure and of loss of perquisites; some with calculations how best to make their fortunes by claims for compensation for offices which they saw would be taken from them; some with planning how best to evade or mislead the inquiries of the commissioners, and others how best to stimulate and aid these inquiries; some with the hope of seeing at length a chance allowed for the culture of public and private virtue, through the extinction of borough corruption; others rejoicing to see that the principle of centralisation was not to be extended beyond institutions where it was absolutely indispensable; and many, very many, looking back into history with a new interest, whether hopeful or melancholy, now that the time had come for an essential modification of an institution which forms a part of the body of that history from end to end!

First, they saw groups of Romans sitting down here and there in the land, and arranging their own local affairs, while living under the general law of Rome. Then, there were the Saxons, who, on arriving, found the town communities fitted, by their municipal practice, for adaptation to their own more general system of self-government, which extended equally over town and country. They put their borough-reeve at the head of the town government — by popular election — as they

placed their shire-reeves over the shires, to collect the revenues of the state. And then came the Normans, who no longer permitted the borough-reeve to be elected by his neighbours, but put in his place a bailiff appointed by the king, as the shire-reeve was superseded by the viscount. Then appears in the history, the way of escape from the oppressions of the bailiff found by the citizens; the offer to the king of a larger sum, to be transmitted direct to his exchequer, than could be collected by the bailiff, who, besides, absorbed some by the way; and next, there is the ready acceptance of these terms, and the grant of a long succession of charters, granting the boroughs to the burgesses in fee-farm; that is, to be their own, as long as they should punctually pay to the royal exchequer the crown-rent agreed upon. And here, when the relieved inhabitants were returning to their habits of municipal freedom, does the familiar name of mayor first present itself. The Saxon townsmen had no cause to love the title of bailiff; and they took, instead, the Norman name which signified the chief municipal officer of a town. At this time, the burgesses or townsmen were those who had a settled abode in the town, were members of some one trade-company, and shared in the liberties and free customs of the town. This was, in fact, a household qualification, distinguishing the citizens from temporary residents—for trade or other purposes—who neither paid taxes nor enjoyed the privileges of citizenship. The means of obtaining the franchise seem to have arisen simply out of the conveniences of the case. A man's settled residence was most easily ascertained through the circumstances of his birth, apprenticeship, and marriage. A man who obtained trading advantages by a settlement in a particular town would gladly obtain citizenship by purchase. As for obtaining the freedom of any borough through the gift of the inhabitants, it was obviously a substantial advantage in those days, as well as the honour that it is, by traditional associations, in ours. In the time of Edward III., we find an authorisation of the residence in towns of men who were not free of the borough—the citizens being empowered to make them contribute to the public expenditure; and hence it is easily seen how those

guilds or trade-companies became important, which verified the position and rights of every resident within the town-walls, and were the settled method of access to the privileges of citizenship. We can see these men and times with the mind's eye; the great middle class, of which history has told so little, busy within their towns—busy about their private affairs, their manufactures, and their commerce—busy about their local affairs, their magistracy, their criminals, the defences of their walls, and the amount and management of their funds; and all idle and indifferent about those wars, those struggles among princes and nobles, of which history tells so much. The chroniclers of the time saw the great movements of the country—the march of armies, the gatherings of the great barons and their retainers, and the exterminating conflicts on noted fields of battle; but they knew little of the conclaves of townsmen within their walls, to take measures of defence against the threats and exactions of neighbouring nobles, for the protection of their ever-expanding commerce, and for the choice of their annual delegate—their mayor—who was to be answerable to the king for the payment of the duties to the crown. In course of time, the citizens obtained release from the necessity of sending their chief-magistrate to London, and had permission by charter to take the oaths of their own officers, or to tender them to the constable of the nearest royal castle. Thus far, the functions of the town magistracy were executive only. The making of local laws was a separate affair, and had been managed by general assemblies, weekly or other, which agreed upon regulations binding upon all. As numbers increased, and trade extended, this became inconvenient; and a representative system grew up; and with it a distinction of classes, which originated a town aristocracy, and the danger—which became an abuse, increasing from century to century—of that mutual election and self-election which ripened into our modern and intolerable grievance of close corporations. In Henry III.'s reign, an attempt was made in London by 'the more discreet of the city' to elect a mayor in opposition to the popular voice; but the citizens met at St. Paul's Cross, and showed that the innovators were less 'discreet' than they

had thought themselves. The discreet of the city were happily defeated in their aim. Among the charters of Henry VII., there is one establishing a self-elective council of aldermen in Bristol. But the great contest — the greatest recorded in the history of English municipal institutions—took place after the Reformation, when the question of a parliament disposed in favour of a Catholic or Protestant occupant of the throne became all-important to government. Then it rested with the sheriffs to declare which were parliamentary and which non-parliamentary boroughs. The parliamentary could not be put down, but less important ones might be raised up; and in the three reigns succeeding Henry VIII.'s, we find sixty-three places sending members to parliament which were before, or of late, unrepresented. There was little or no enlargement of popular freedom in this proceeding; for the crown took care that the accession should tell in its own favour. It assumed the right of giving governing charters, by which it controlled municipal operations; most of the new order of charters giving to small councils—of express royal appointment, and indissoluble self-elective powers—the privilege of local government, and even, in many cases, of election of parliamentary representatives.

Hence was derived the pernicious power of the Stuarts; and from this period we may date the subjugation of British political independence. The royal and aristocratic power over the commonalty was not overthrown even by the Revolution; for subsequent charters were framed upon the model of those of the Charleses and Jameses; and, as the corporation commissioners tell us in their report, 'the charters of George III. do not differ in this respect from those granted in the worst period of the history of these boroughs.'

To those who felt, as well as said, that the welfare of a nation depends on its public and private virtue, who saw that the private vice of a community was found to be in substantial accordance with its municipal corruption, and who looked back through this avenue of history so as to perceive how low our people had sunk from the municipal freedom and purity of long preceding ages, it was con-

solatory to read the bold exposure of the case by the corporation commissioners, in their report of 1835. From this report, two commissioners dissented, on grounds which had no influence on subsequent proceedings; and the following statement bears the signatures of sixteen: 'Even where these institutions exist in their least imperfect form, and are most rightfully administered, they are inadequate to the wants of the present state of society. In their actual condition, where not productive of evil, they exist, in a great majority of instances, for no purpose of general utility. The perversion of municipal institutions to political ends has occasioned the sacrifice of local interests to party purposes, which have been frequently pursued through the corruption and demoralisation of the electoral bodies. In conclusion, we report to your majesty that there prevails among the inhabitants of a great majority of the incorporated towns a general, and, in our opinion, a just dissatisfaction with their municipal institutions, a distrust of the self-elected municipal councils, whose powers are subjected to no popular control, and whose acts and proceedings, being secret, are unchecked by the influence of public opinion—a distrust of the municipal magistracy, tainting with suspicion the local administration of justice, and often accompanied with contempt of the persons by whom the law is administered—a discontent under the burdens of local taxation, while revenues that ought to be applied for the public advantage are diverted from their legitimate use, and are sometimes wastefully bestowed for the benefit of individuals, sometimes squandered for purposes injurious to the character and morals of the people. We therefore feel it to be our duty to represent to your majesty that the existing municipal corporations of England and Wales neither possess nor deserve the confidence and respect of your majesty's subjects; and that a thorough reform must be effected before they can become, what we humbly submit to your majesty they ought to be, useful and efficient instruments of local government.'

It is evident at a glance that a thorough reform must meet with a vehement opposition. The means of getting up such opposition lay mainly in the hands of those whose

corruption was to be exposed, and whose gains were to be abolished. In the worst towns, there was the strongest body of corrupt or bigoted officials who held the worst portion of the inhabitants under their control, while those who most desired reform were precisely those who were least in a position to make themselves heard. The noble-minded operative who had refused £50 for his vote was borne down by the noisy, tipsy freeman, whose 'loyalty' was very profitable to him. The benevolent and pains-taking quiet citizen who strongly suspected that the funds of an orphan girls' school went to support a brothel, or who could never obtain admission to a charity trust because it was supposed that he would remonstrate against the frequent banquets at the expense of the trust—the peaceable Dissenter who found himself put aside in times of public danger, because the loyal corporation charged him with wishing to burn down the cathedral—the unexceptionable tradesman, who found himself out out by the idle and unskilful, because they had corporation connection—such men as these had no chance of being heard against the sharp and unscrupulous lawyers, the pompous aldermen, the rabble of venal voters, and the compact body of town-contractors, who clamoured, as for life, for the maintenance of things as they were. Then there were the thoughtless and ignorant who loved the city shows—the mayor's feast, the election processions, the fun and riot of the ward-elections—the antique pageantry of some old towns, with their grim dragon carried about the streets, and the prancing St. George, and the Whifflers in pink and blue, with their wooden swords; an antique pageantry which wiser people than themselves would be sorry to see no more. And again, there were the anxious Conservatives and the positive old Tories, who believed that the world would come to an end if long-standing institutions were meddled with. What could the plaints of the sick and the aged and the orphan, and the indignation of the disinterested, and the protest of the excluded, and the appeal of the obscure, do amidst the hubbub of desperate wrong-doers and exasperated haters of change? Hitherto they could do nothing but complain; but now they might hope, and they could speak. In every corporate town sat men

sent on purpose to hear all that could be told. Great was the consternation at first; and fiercer grew the threats and clamour, every day, from the highest to the lowest of those who dreaded change. No one can forget what he saw of the action of opposition in any part of that scale. At the lowest end were the insolent and profligate freemen, who earned bread, and the drink in which they rolled about the streets, by selling their votes, and who would never want a market while the corporate funds remained untouched, and the account-books kept secret. These swaggerers swore to put the Duke of Cumberland on the throne if any ministry dared to look into their resources. At the end of the scale sat he in whom was embodied the rank old Toryism which was only waiting to depart with him from our social life of England. Lord Eldon fitly headed the scale of the angry and the alarmed. 'He protested loudly in private,' we learn from a contemporary sketch of him, 'with feverish alarm,' against the measure, 'as leading directly to confusion. Its interference with vested rights shocked his sense of equity even more than the sweeping clauses of the Reform Act. To set at nought ancient charters as so many bits of decayed parchment, and destroy the archives of town-halls, seemed in the eyes of the old magistrate, for so many years the guardian of corporate rights, a crowning iniquity. Pale as a marble statue, and confined to his house in Hamilton Place by infirmity, he would deprecate equally the temerity of ministers and the madness of the people; and his vaticinations, like the prophet's scroll, were full to overflowing with lamentation and woe. His correspondence, for some years previously, had borne marks of the troubled gloom with which he viewed the changes gradually darkening over all he had loved and venerated, till he felt almost a stranger to the institutions of his native land.'

The opposition was incalculable, and might have been supposed unmanageable; yet, so flagrant were the abuses, that at last it required less than half of one session of parliament—from June to September—to carry into law a thorough reform of the municipal institutions of England and Wales.

The abolition of abuses, flagrant as they might be, was

not, however, the most weighty consideration with the advocates of municipal reform. They had a higher aim and hope—to train the people to self-government, without which parliamentary reform could be little more than a name. A representative system is worse than a despotism for a nation which has no ideas to represent—no clear conception of its political duties, rights and privileges—no intellect and no conscience in regard to social affairs. The opponents of both parliamentary and municipal reform feared the ignorance and the self-will of the mass of the people; and not without reason; since the corruption of the representation in both departments had caused the ignorance and aggravated the self-will which were now sure to be displayed. The evil was unquestionable; the question was how to deal with it. Either the people must be governed without participation from themselves—that is, England must go back into a despotism; or the people must be educated into a capacity for being governed by themselves, through the principle of representation. The only possible education for political, as for all other moral duty, is by the exercise of the duty itself. It was high time to begin the training anew; and those who most clearly saw the necessity were most thoroughly aware of the imperfections which would immediately appear. They knew that the mass of the municipal electors would show much folly, much ignorance, much selfishness, much anger, in the first exercise of new rights; they knew that much nonsense would be talked in the town-councils, and that party wrangling would be violent at first; and they no more regarded this as an objection to a reformed system than they looked to school-boys for the discretion and steady conscientiousness of disciplined men. They knew also that time would do its work, in instructing the raw, and giving the wise and disinterested their natural ascendancy over the violent and the corrupt. They were aware that this measure was of the highest importance to the virtue and the liberties of the nation—the most necessary preparation for all future good—the seed-field of hope for the future political life of Great Britain; and they gave their efforts to the cause accordingly, with a seriousness and energy which they could never have com-

manded for the mere abolition of abuses of any enormity. The great virtue of the Reform Bill was its extinction of corruption, and its clearing the ground for a true representation. The Municipal Reform Bill had all that merit, and, besides, the greater one of pressing every man's public duty home to him, and engaging him in its exercise, in his own street, and amidst a community where every face was familiar to him. The work was of the highest order; its scope was fully perceived by the Whig administration; and it was done by them in the most admirable manner that the times and their position admitted. Great as were some of their objects and achievements during the early years of their rule, it is probable that this reform will, in far future centuries, stand out to view above the rest as the highest, from its connection with the deepest principles of political virtue, and therefore the most lasting system of political liberties.

The most radical imperfection of the scheme, and that which must subject it to a future reform as sweeping as the last, is its protraction of the severance of the interests of town and country. The Romans, as we have seen, conferred their municipal quality—capacity for civil rights through liability to civil duties—prominently on the inhabitants of towns, where alone institutions of citizenship were established by them during their occupation of Britain. The Saxon system was scarcely cognisant of towns at all; but when the Saxons came to Britain, they found a system existing in the towns to which theirs was easily adapted; and they did not subvert it. During the feudal ages, all civil rights were concentrated in the towns; so that the very word municipal is to us applicable only to a town system. As civil war subsided, agriculture rose to the point of superseding mere territorial dignity; and before the great rise of manufactures, it was the unquestioned leading interest of the commonalty, while closely connected with the territorial dignity of the aristocracy. With the rise of manufactures, a new political era opened in England. For half a century before the reign of William IV., the manufacturing population had been gaining upon the agricultural, at a perpetually increasing rate; and if the country gentlemen in parlia-

ment who opposed the Municipal Reform Bill had understood their own case, they would rather have striven for some possible inclusion of the rural population in the scheme than have opposed a reform in the towns. It is an evil all round that the nation should be divided into two populations, the urban and the rural, whose interests are supposed to be antagonistic; and the vehement cries of agricultural distress which had pained the ears of the nation almost without intermission since the peace, seemed to tell that the agricultural interest was certainly not that which was gaining the ascendency at present. It would have been a vast benefit to all if the two populations could have been united under a system of local government whose objects are of absolutely universal importance, instead of being separated as peremptorily as ever by the reform of town government, while rural administration remained as before. But neither the Whig ministers, if they had wished it, nor any others, could have effected this in 1835, when the mere mention of such a scheme would have been received as a proposal to subordinate the country to the towns. So the rural population remain in a backward and unfavourable condition—subject to the jurisdiction of justices of the peace of counties and divisions of counties, while the town population is in the enjoyment of a representative system which, by improving their intelligence and independence, could not but widen the severance between the two populations, to the disadvantage of the rural, if other influences were not operating, at perhaps an equal rate, on behalf of the latter. The extension of free-trade to agricultural produce, and the consequent improvement of agricultural science and skill which may with certainty be looked for, are likely to raise the mind and the condition of the rural population, till they may become capable of desiring and requiring for themselves a system of local government as favourable as that obtained by the men of the towns; and then some future government will have to grant to the producers and sellers of food, and the capitalists of their class, the same political scope and privilege which the bill of 1835 secured to the producers and sellers of all other articles, and the capitalists of their multifarious class.

The other great imperfection of the measure was one only temporary in its character, but of pernicious operation during the critical years when the citizens required every aid, and no hindrance, in learning to discharge their new duties and exercise their new rights — the privileges of the old freemen were preserved, and with them a large measure of corruption. This was not the work of the administration, but an amendment insisted on by the Lords. The preservation of the parliamentary franchise and corporation property of this depraved body has been the greatest impediment to the purifying operation of the measure; but care was taken by the ministers and the House of Commons that, while existing property and privilege of an objectionable character were tenderly dealt with, no new interests of a similar kind should be permitted to arise; and thus, beneficial as have been the effects of corporate reform from the day that the bill became law, its best results have yet to be realised.

The substance of the measure, as passed, is this:

The points for review are four: the area in the state occupied by the system—the objects of municipal government—the municipal constituency—the municipal functionaries.

The number of boroughs included under the bill was 178, and the collective population about 2,000,000 at that time. Of these boroughs 128 of the most important had a commission of the peace assigned to them; while the other 50 might obtain such a commission on a representation to the crown, by the town-council, that the borough needs the appointment of one or more salaried police-magistrates. London is not included under the act, a special measure being promised for the metropolis; towards which, however, nothing has yet been done. Of the 178 boroughs, 93 were parliamentary boroughs, and their limits were taken as settled by the Reform Bill. The boundaries of the remaining 85 stood as they were before, until parliament should direct an alteration. Each borough was divided into electoral wards—Liverpool into 16; others into 12, 10, or fewer, till the smallest were reached, which needed no division at all. The boundaries of the wards and the number of town-councillors to be returned by

each, were settled after the passing of the act, by barristers appointed for the purpose.

The objects of municipal government were briefly set forth in the king's speech at the close of the session of 1833, in the sentence which recommends parliament 'to mature some measures which may seem best fitted to place the internal government of corporate cities and towns upon a solid foundation, in respect to their finances, their judicature, and their police.' The new act left the old objects untouched, for the most part, except in regard to the administration of justice and of charity trusts. The administration of charity trust-funds was now placed in the hands of trustees appointed by the lord chancellor; and justice was made more accessible, and its functionaries more responsible, by various new provisions. As to the appointment and management of the constabulary, the paving and lighting of the towns, and other duties of the local government, they were not dictated, nor local acts interfered with, by express enactment. The thing to be done was to procure a practical amendment by giving a true constituency to the towns, by which the local authorities should be elected in a genuine manner.

Hitherto, the functionaries made the constituency, and the constituency in return appointed the functionaries; so that if a sufficient number of corrupt and indolent men could be got into league, they could do what they pleased with the powers and the funds of the boroughs. This was now amended. The first class considered was that of the existing freemen, whose privilege, having been hitherto much restricted, was supposed to have been valuable, and of proportionate original cost. It was therefore preserved to them, their wives and widows, sons, daughters, and apprentices, who were to enjoy the same privileges in land and property, shares in common lands and public stock of the borough or corporation, as if the new act had never been passed; but henceforward, the debts of the corporation were to be paid before, and not after as hitherto, the claims of such persons were satisfied. The parliamentary franchise was also, as we have said, preserved to the old freemen. But the way to further abuse was stopped, not only by creating an honest constituency which should

swamp the corrupt old one, but by a provision that no rights of borough freedom should henceforth be acquired by gift or purchase, or in any other modes than those now enacted. The act prescribes a property qualification, on the understood ground that the municipal funds are provided by the propertied classes, who ought therefore to have the disposal of them. The condition of a three years' residence was much objected to, by men here and there of all parties; but it was believed to be necessary to obviate sudden and large creations of voters for party purposes—an evil of which government had had recent and inconvenient experience, the admissions of freemen in certain towns in England having been six times as many in 1830 as in the preceding year. If a necessity, however, the restriction is a bad necessity; and it will probably be repealed when the purification of municipal government has become assured. To be a municipal constituent, a man must be of full age; must, on the last day of the preceding August, have occupied premises within the borough continuously for the three previous years; must have been for those three years an inhabitant householder within seven miles of the borough; and must have been rated to the poor, and have paid those and all borough-rates during the same three years. Such was the constituency ordained by the new act; a narrow one, but good as far as it goes, and understood to be so restricted on account of previous abuses.

The registration of the constituency was to be managed by an organisation resembling that under the Reform Bill, with the variations rendered necessary by difference of circumstances. The overseers of parishes make the lists; the town-clerk corrects and publishes them; and, since the first year, the mayor and the assessors appointed for the purpose have revised them.

The functionaries of town corporations and their constituents had hitherto borne a strange variety of titles in different places. Henceforth they were everywhere to be called 'the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses.' This body was henceforth a constituted corporation, empowered to do all legal acts as a body, and not as individuals; to sue and be sued by the corporate name; and to transmit their

corporate rights to their corporate successors. The town council is the great ruling body of the borough. The wards elect the councillors, whose number was, as has been said, apportioned after the passing of the act by barristers who visited the boroughs for the purpose. The council administers, by its committees, all the local business —the constabulary appointments, and the paving and lighting; and the body in conclave appoint their own officers, decree the expenditure of the borough fund, and the leasing of land and buildings; and they have the power of making bye-laws for the prevention and suppression of nuisances, and other objects of minor legislation. All needful safeguards against corruption are provided by making committees responsible to the whole council, by the appointment of auditors of accounts, who shall not themselves be councillors at the time, and by the regulations that all town accounts shall be published; that two-thirds of the council shall be present at the passing of any bye-law, and that forty days shall be allowed to the secretary of state to object to such bye-law, and procure its disallowance by the sovereign. A property qualification for the office of councillor is requisite. One-third of the council go out, and are supplied by annual election on the 1st of November.

The mayor is chosen from among the councillors; and he must serve, or pay a fine of £100. He presides over the public acts of the borough during his year of office; is for that time and the next year a justice of the peace; revises the registration with the assessors, and sanctions the lists by his signature in open court; and is made returning-officer on occasion of election to parliament.

The function of alderman is somewhat anomalous under the new act, into which it was introduced by the Lords, more, as it appears, from a clinging to old names and forms than from any clear idea of what there was for aldermen to do. By their remaining in office six years, and half going out every three years, while their body includes one-third of the whole council, the regulation for replenishing the council by new members to the number of one-third annually is set aside. They are little more

than councillors having precedence of others, and being removable at the end of six years instead of three.

The town-clerk and treasurer are appointed by the council. The first has to keep in safety the charter-deeds and records of the borough; to make out the registration lists; keep the minutes of the council, and be subject to their direction. The treasurer is responsible for his accounts to the auditors, to whom he is to submit them half-yearly. The auditors are annually elected by the burgesses on the 1st of March. The assessors are elected in like manner.

The power was reserved to the crown of appointing such justices of the peace as government may think proper, also such salaried police-magistrates as the borough may apply for; and again, a recorder for a single borough, or for two or more in conjunction, provided the councillors of such town or towns desire to have a recorder, show cause for such an appointment, and prove that they can pay his salary. Boroughs having a recorder have separate courts of quarter-sessions of the peace, such courts being co-equal in powers with similar courts for counties.

All church property in the hands of the old corporations was required to be sold under the direction of the ecclesiastical commissioners, the proceeds to be invested in government securities, and the annual interest to form a part of the borough fund. Towns not at that time incorporated might obtain a charter of incorporation by petition to the privy-council. Some of the largest towns in England obtained charters by this method within a few years after the passing of the act.

It was on the 5th of June that Lord John Russell introduced the Municipal Reform Bill to the House of Commons. By the cordial union of the Whig and Radical parties, it was passed rapidly and safely through the Lower House. The difficulty was with the peers, who carried one amendment after another against ministers; and among others, a decision to hear counsel for the existing corporations, which delayed the progress of the measure for some time. The opposition was, as might be expected, about the rights of property—the property of poor men, it was insisted, and therefore to be the more

carefully regarded; and about the overthrow of ancient practices and observances. But the case was too bad for a destructive opposition. As for the rights of property of the poor—in the city of Norwich, there were 3225 resident freemen, of whom 315 were paupers; 808 more were not rated. In Lincoln, nearly four-fifths of the population were excluded from the corporation; and of the corporate body, three-fourths paid no rates. At Cambridge, out of 20,000 inhabitants, there were only 118 freemen. At Ipswich, of 2000 rate-payers, only 187 belonged to the corporation. In the face of these facts, it was a mockery to talk of the rights of property being disregarded by the bill. As to the ancient practices and observances, it was only necessary to look back into history to see that the existing state of things was in fact a mass of modern innovation and corruption, and that the bill was a restoration of ancient rights—a recurrence to the true old municipal principle. From a conviction that the fact was so, and that the true old principle would, in a generation or two, work itself clear of the mischief of the Lords' amendments, the ministers after due consideration, adopted those amendments rather than lose the measure. So they preserved the existing race of poor freemen, who must die out in a few years; let in the anomalous aldermen, in the hope that their uselessness and the evil of breaking in on the rotation of the town-councillors would be ascertained before long; yielded some points in regard to qualification, and induced the Lords to yield some of their points; and finally passed the bill on the 7th of September. On the 9th, it became law.

The passage of the bill was a severe and unexpected blow to the high Tory party, who had confidently reckoned on its being rejected by the Commons when returned from the Upper House. After all that they had done, they found that their staff of magistracy was swept away, to be succeeded by responsible officials returned by a genuine principle of election. The corrupt office holders under the old system saw with dismay that the church and charity funds which had given them so much power and profit were now to be publicly administered for the general good, and that borough property would be hence-

forth the property of the borough, and the police the servants of the public and not theirs. As Colonel Sibthorp expressed it, these exclusive privileges were gone 'at one fell swoop'—as O'Connell expressed it, 'tag-rag and bobtail was swept away.' The rejoicing among the honest and enlightened townsmen of the kingdom was naturally great. Yet, perhaps, there were few, even of the most joyous, who did not feel more or less regret at some of the adjuncts of the change; at the extinction, for instance, of antique municipal observances and shows. It was a great thing to see ancient charities renovated, schools and asylums rising again, and coffers filling with money restored to the purposes of the needy. It was a great thing to see our country planted over with little republics, where the citizens would henceforth be trained to political thought and public virtue; but it seemed a pity that the city feasts must go—the processions be seen no more—the gorgeous dresses be laid by—the banners be folded up—the dragon be shelved, and St. George never allowed to wear his armour again; and the gay runners, in their pink and blue jerkins, their peaked shoes and rosettes, and their fearful wooden swords, turned into mere weavers, tinmen, and shoemakers. Already, some of us may find ourselves discoursing eagerly to children, as Englishmen used to do to wondering Americans, of the sights we once saw on great corporation days; and when we are dead, a future generation may turn over the municipal wardrobes before their colours are faded, and cast a glance over the mayors' bills of fare, and ask whether such things could have belonged to common life in the nineteenth century. These things, from being once solemn and significant, may have become child's play, of which we of the nineteenth century ought to have been ashamed; yet there are perhaps few of us that were not sorry to see them go. For once, Lord Eldon was not without general sympathy.

CHAPTER IV.

Ecclesiastical Commissions—Popular Ignorance—Courtenay Delusion—Results of the Commission—Non-residence Act—Abolition of Sinecures—Tithe Commutation Act—Popular Education—Lord Brougham's Scheme—Ministerial Scheme.

AMIDST the existing state of feeling with regard to the Church, its wealth and its inefficiency for the religious instruction and guidance of the people, it was impossible for any government to feel or assume indifference to its condition. We find, therefore, both the administrations of 1835 issuing an ecclesiastical commission, for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting upon the changes which might be effected in regard to church territory, income, and patronage, so as to render remuneration and labour more commensurate with each other, to enforce residence, and destroy the necessity of pluralities, by providing for all a sufficient revenue. Both commissions—the one issued by Sir R. Peel in February, and the other by Lord Melbourne in June—were publicly objected to by parties within the Church, ranging from Dr. Pusey to Sydney Smith; while those outside the Church, constituting nearly half the population between the Land's End and John o' Groat's, regarded the matter with no great interest, because with little hope. Dr. Pusey and his High-Church party denied the right of the government to meddle with the distribution of church offices and funds; and Sydney Smith, in a series of published letters, complained of the commission being composed chiefly of the high dignitaries of the Church, whose judgment might, he thought, have been beneficially aided by information and suggestion from a lower order of clergy, more conversant with the minds and the needs of the people. Those outside the pale of the Establishment, knowing that the appropriation principle was not to be named, expected little from a mere redistribution of office and funds, made by the highest holders of office and income, and to the

people at large, the most interesting part of the whole matter was the conspicuous fact that the Church was at last compelled to undertake its own reform—or what its dignitaries conceived to be so. Startling evidences of popular ignorance and the blindest fanaticism were forcing themselves on universal attention, just at the time when the publication of the revenues of the Church was prompting the question how it was possible that an Establishment so rich in men and money could exist beside a population in a state of such heathen blindness. The ecclesiastical commission of 1831 had declared the gross revenues of the Established Church in England and Wales to amount to £3,792,885; and the net revenue to £3,490,497. During the ensuing years of inquiry and legislation, men did not forget that the net revenue of the English Church amounted to three millions and a half; and while they were waiting to see how these funds would be dealt with, events were continually occurring to show what ought to be done with them.

Without going over again the sickening record, found in the register of almost every year, of ignorance and fanaticism shown in disturbances requiring repression by soldiery and punishment by the law, we may refer to one event which seemed to occur, as was said in parliament, for the shaming of the Church. We find too much besides —we find a rector of Lockington tithing the wages of a poor labourer, named Dodsworth, and throwing him into jail for the sum of four shillings and fourpence. We find church-rate riots abounding—the panelling of pews broken in, and men exchanging blows in the church with fists and cudgels. We find revivals of religion taking place here and there—scenes worthy only of a frantic heathenism—scenes of raving, of blasphemous prayer, of panic-struck egotism, followed by burial processions to lay in the ground the victims of apoplexy or nervous exhaustion. We find men selling their wives in the market-places, with halters round their necks—none of the parties having the remotest conception of what marriage is in the eye of the law or of the Christian religion. We find crowds, in such a place as Sheffield, gutting, and repeatedly firing, the Medical School, through the old prejudices against

dissection. But all these incidents, and many others of like nature with them, wrought less on the public mind, to the shame of the Church, than an event which happened in 1838, almost under the shadow of Canterbury Cathedral. That in such a neighbourhood a large body of the common people should believe a lunatic to be the Messiah, and follow him to death through such a series of observances as only a lunatic could have imposed, was a shock to the clergy, it was believed, and was certainly a subject of painful amazement to the rest of the world, which was not at all solicitous to keep its opinion to itself. From the House of Commons to the wayside inn, men were asking what the Church was for, and what the clergy could be about, if the population of a district near Canterbury could worship the wounds in the hands and side of a raving lunatic; see him fire a pistol at a star, and bring it down; believe him invulnerable, and themselves through him; expect to see him sail away, as he declared he came, on clouds of glory through the heavens; and, when he was shot dead, be quite happy in the certainty that he would rise again in a month.

This poor wretch, named Thom, had been confined in a lunatic asylum for four years, and was then delivered over to his friends on the supposition of his being harmless. He then called himself Sir William Courtenay, fancying himself a man of high family, as well as large estates—in the same breath claiming to be the Messiah, and threatening hell-fire against all who would not follow him to obtain his estates, and get rich themselves. He did not want for followers; for, as the people said about his knowledge of the Scriptures, 'no un*learn*ed person could stand before Sir William.' He fired a pistol against himself, and was not wounded—there being no bullet. He put a lighted lucifer-match under a bean-stack, which did not burn; and these things were regarded as true miracles by his followers. They believed that nothing could hurt them while following him; and when a mother could not refuse to recognise the wounds of her son, she comforted herself that he was 'fighting for his Saviour.' They kissed the madman's feet, and worshipped him. A woman followed him on the last day of his life, wherever he went,

with a pail of water, because he had said that if he died and if she put water between his lips, he would rise again in a month. He administered the sacrament to his followers in bread and water. As he lay dead, his blouse was torn up, that his followers might carry away the shreds as relics. The strongest rebuke to the Church, however, was at the funeral. From the fear of attack, and rescue of the body, there was a race to the churchyard —a trial of speed between the funeral-van and the attendant gigs and carts: but, far worse, the clergyman felt it necessary to omit those parts of the burial-service which relate to the resurrection of the dead. Many stolid and miserable wretches were watching the interment from the railing—some ghastly from wounds received in the fight; and the clergyman feared that any promise of a resurrection would make them watch for the return of their prophet, to reign in the Powderham estates, float in the clouds, and give to each of his true followers a farm of forty acres. It was long before the clergy of Canterbury heard the last of this. In the affair of this madman and his pretensions, ten lives were lost in a few moments, and many persons were wounded. The party of fanatics had strolled about the country for four days, praying, obtaining recruits, and looking for the millennium. A farmer, whose men had been seduced from their work, gave information to the police. The first constable who presented himself was shot, by Thom himself, who then took his sword, and hacked the body, crying out: 'Now am I not your Saviour?' A party of military was brought from Canterbury, whose officer, Lieutenant Bennett, was deliberately shot dead by the same hand. The lunatic himself was the next to fall, crying with his last breath: 'I have Jesus in my heart.' The local jails were filled with his followers, who were too ignorant to wonder at what they had done, even after the discovery that their leader and companions could be wounded and die. Some were transported for life, or for terms, and the rest imprisoned for different periods. They were now at last brought, under such circumstances as these, under the care of the Church, by which they should have been instructed and guided from their youth up; and at the end

of a year's imprisonment some of them signed a paper declaratory of their shame and sorrow at their impious delusion, and at the acts to which it had led them. Some who could not sign their names, declared the same thing among their old neighbours. Very few of the band could read and write.

It was not likely that such evils as were indicated by this event would be reached by a commission of Church dignitaries inquiring into property and income, and unpractised in dealing with the popular mind; but, small as was the expectation of all parties, the result in eight years disappointed even that. The number of benefices and churches whose incomes had been augmented by the ecclesiastical commissioners for England was, in that time 469; and the augmentation amounted, in the whole, to the sum of £25,779. The church would certainly not save the people or itself in this way; and it was well that other measures were attempted.

The ecclesiastical commissioners were incorporated by act of parliament in 1836, their number then consisting of thirteen, and including several members of the government. One of their first operations was a rearrangement of episcopal sees. Two new sees—those of Ripon and Manchester—were created; and four of the old ones were consolidated into two—Gloucester being united to Bristol, and St. Asaph to Bangor. After this, the chief work of the commissioners was making the redistribution, whose result, after eight years, has been mentioned. It was felt by most reasonable people that the less they expected the better, after hearing that the commissioners did not find that any process of redistribution could render the income of the bishoprics sufficient for the wants of the bishops—the number of bishops being twenty-six, and the amount of income nearly £150,000 per annum. Church reformers who made such a declaration as this were not the kind of reformers who would secure the peasantry of England against seduction by future maniacs and blasphemers. Something more than this must be done.

In 1838 an act passed, the object of which was to correct the abuse of non-residence—to render it impossible henceforth for the beneficed clergyman to be absent, at his own

pleasure, from the field of his duties, while enjoying the proceeds of his living. If absent for between three months and six, for other than professional purposes, without a licence, he must forfeit a third of the income from his benefice; if between six and eight months, half the income; if twelve months, three-fourths of the income. These requisitions were not new; but they were to be fenced about with strong securities. Before granting the licence, the bishop must be satisfied that the intended absentee has provided a proper substitute, duly salaried. Other regulations came in with this—methods by which the bishop can keep himself informed of the condition of the parishes under the care of his clergy, and not only check the tempting practice of non-residence, but form some idea of the state of the relation between the pastors and their flocks. This was a great improvement, not only as securing to the flocks the presence of their pastors, but as discouraging the entrance into the service of the Church of men who have no taste for its duties, but come in merely for a maintenance. The condition of residence is as terrible or disgusting to such a class of clergy as it is welcome to those who are worthy of their function. Great as this improvement was, much more was wanted; and two years after, another considerable step was taken.

In 1840, an act was passed which made a great sweep of abuses, and applied the accruing funds to good purposes. It abolished many ecclesiastical sinecures, or deprived the holders of their emoluments; it abolished the old self-elected deans and chapters, decreeing that deans should be appointed by the crown, and canons by the bishops; it authorised the purchase and suppression of sinecure rectories in private patronage, and the devotion of the proceeds to the spiritual wants of the people at hand or elsewhere. All the profits arising from these proceedings were to form a fund at the disposal of the commissioners, for the supply of the most pressing spiritual needs which came to their knowledge. There was a good deal of outcry, from the clergy as well as others, about granting such powers as this bill conveyed to such a body of functionaries—placed so high above the level of popular feeling—as constituted the ecclesiastical commission. Pages might be filled with

the remonstrances, serious and jocose, of Sydney Smith upon the occasion; and there was much truth in the objections which he made; but it was so great a thing to get rid of so much scandal, to sweep away so much abuse, and administer a stern rebuke to the sinecurists of the Church and their patrons, that the act was, on the whole, regarded as the most considerable advance yet made by the commission towards a reform of the Church. As far as it went, it was a clearing of the ground. But this, after all, was a small matter; and more must be done.

The Tithe Commutation Act, for England and Wales, which passed in 1837, was a great promoter of peace and good-will between the Church and the people at large. From year to year, the irritation on both sides on the subject of tithes had become more and more intolerable; and, as we have seen, in one place a peasant was shooting his rector, and in another, a rector was tithing the peasant's wages, and throwing him into jail for the sum of 4*s.* 4*d.* Such things have not been heard of since; for the admirable measure of 1837 has put an end to the quarrelling which was discreditable enough to the nation, and perfectly scandalous in connection with the Church. Tithe, not being a tax paid to government, nor to any institution, but to almost as many lay as clerical individuals, could not be swept away, or repealed like an ordinary tax. It had become so mixed up with a mass of interests and affairs, that its abolition could not have been effected but by a confiscation which would have put the gain into the pockets of men who had no business with it. The true method was to convert tithe into a rent-charge; and this was done in a very effective manner. The charge, payable in money, was determined by the average price of corn for the seven preceding years; and all kinds of tithe were to come under this arrangement. Every facility was given for a voluntary agreement between the tithe-owner and payer; and both were, in a large number of cases, glad to settle their disputes upon this basis; but if, after the lapse of a sufficient time, no such agreement was made, the tithe commissioners had power to enforce it. In eight years from the passing of the act, about half the business of assigning and apportioning rent-charges throughout the

kingdom was completed; and a very large proportion of the agreements was voluntary. Provision was made for a redemption of the tithe-charge, where desired; the payer being authorised to make over land to the owner, not exceeding twenty acres in one parish, in purchase of his release from tithe-charges for ever. This power of redemption, though good, was less valuable than it would have been thought at an earlier date. Formerly, men would have sacrificed much to free themselves from the perplexing and galling uncertainty of tithe-charges, which prevented them from undertaking improvements, or deprived them of all the profit. But now the uncertainty and malicious incidence of the tax were removed by its conversion into a rent-charge, on a broad and ascertainable basis. Here, again, was a great clearing of the ground for improvement of the relation between the Church and the people. But it was not enough. The worst evils remained; and there were some at the time who expressed their sense of these evils in the words of Milton, which tell how the poor 'sit at the foot of a pulpited divine to as little purpose of benefiting, as the sheep in their pens at Smithfield.'

The desideratum was a system of education. Everybody knew this. That is, everybody knew that the great mass of the working-classes, and all the vast pauper class of England, were deplorably ignorant. But who could say what was to be done, while the Church did not educate its own body, and yet rose up in opposition at every mention of a plan which did not give the control and administration of education to the clergy, and the Dissenters could not possibly agree to any such condition? The Dissenters exerted themselves much more than the Church to educate the children within their respective bodies; but, besides that the instruction they could give was desultory, partial, and superficial, those bodies did not comprehend the most ignorant and destitute classes—the very poor agricultural labourers and the abandoned of the towns, who belonged to no religious denomination at all. The majority of all denominations objected to secular education: and on any system of religious instruction they could not agree. In various parts of the Continent the spectacle might be seen of children sitting on the

same bench, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, having their understandings opened, their consciences awakened, and their affections flowing out upon one another, with a prospect before them of co-operation in their future lives —the duties of citizenship rendered easy by associations of schooldays, and purged from the sectarian taint that renders English society an aggregate of bodies which distrust and dislike each other through prejudices sent down from generation to generation. But among us such a spectacle could not be hoped for; for no subject is less understood by our nation at large than that of religious liberty. Religious liberty could not become understood but by improved general education; and general education could not be had for want of religious liberty. It was truly a desperate case. We have seen how fruitlessly efforts had been made by Mr. Brougham and others, to extinguish this fatality; and while such efforts resulted only in increased positiveness and bitterness on every hand, thousands and tens of thousands of children had been passing off into a condition of hopeless ignorance and depravity, amidst which the most erroneous views of the Christian religion would have been as the dayspring from on high to those who sit in darkness. Combined with what else they would have learned, there were no views of Christianity which could have been imparted in England that would not have been salvation to the host of children in the Durham coal-pits, and the wilds of Wales, and the hovels of Dorsetshire, and the cellars of Liverpool, and the precincts of Canterbury, and the rookeries of London, who have sunk, the while, into abysses of guilt and misery, through the neglect of the state of which they were the helpless and unconscious members. The high honour of being the first to lay a hand on the barrier of exclusion belongs to the Whig administrations of this period. It was little that they could do; and that little could not expand into an effective system. From the nature of the case, their plan could be but of temporary duration, as well as most restricted operation; for they could only help those who could, more or less, help themselves; whereas the aid was needed especially by those who were unconscious of their own need: but, if they

could drive in only a little wedge which must be thrown away, it was they who found the crevice, and struck the first blow.

It was the fashion of the time to laugh at the Whig administrations for their resort to special commissions—a resort, however, for which the country is much indebted to them. That they did not employ this method, in the early days of their rule, as a preparation for an educational system, while they used it with eminent success in their poor-law and municipal reforms, is an indication of their hopelessness about establishing a system at all. Without a full and protracted inquiry, the results of which should be offered in a comprehensive report, no measure could be framed which had a chance of working well. The question of endowments was under investigation; and nothing could be proposed about funds till the results of that inquiry were known. The actual state of education was not ascertained; nor had the legislature any definite notions as to the kind and degree of education which should be desired or attempted for the people at large. It was a rare thing to meet with an English gentleman, in or out of parliament, who had any clear views on the question of state or voluntary education—which was best for us in itself—which was most procurable for us—and whether they should, could, or might be in any degree united. Such a 'Whig commission' as it was the fashion of the day to laugh at, would have brought knowledge to legislators, and made them think and discuss, till their minds had attained some clearness. The public attention would have been fixed, and its interest aroused, by the same means; and in a few years—perhaps two or three—the matter would have been ripe for legislation. But it was clear that ministers dared not employ this method. Parliament, being yet blind to the importance of the project, would have complained of the expense; the Church would have risen up to oppose an invasion of what she considered her province; and the Dissenters would, as we see by the light of a later time, have attacked with fury any proposal to modify their operations among the young of their own sects. So, nothing was said about any broad plan of an extensive commission,

with a view to future legislation; and ministers and parliament could learn only from such information as came in through the factory inspectors, the charity and poor law commissioners, and the witnesses who gave testimony before an education committee of the House of Commons in 1834–5.

Lord Brougham ventured to proceed upon the partial and most imperfect information thus obtained, to form and propose to parliament a scheme of national education in the session of 1837; and the result was what might have been anticipated—a plan too crude for adoption. His plan would have placed the school-system under the control of the administration of the day, while leaving it subject to the worst evils of voluntaryism; and thus it could never have commanded general confidence, while it left unsolved the sectarian difficulties which have been the chief embarrassment throughout. There were yet other objections, so evident to those who knew most on the subject of which all knew but too little, that the measure, introduced in two succeeding years, was dropped without a contest. What the ministers did was very modest in comparison with this; and, modest as their effort was, it cost them so much trouble and opposition, that no one will venture to say they could have done more.

As we have seen, a committee of the Commons sat during two sessions, to receive and report upon evidence as to the condition of education. This is a subject quite unmanageable by a parliamentary committee, by its vastness, and the impossibility of securing an average—a true representation—of witnesses. The committee, therefore, was of little use, except as an evidence that the great subject of education was becoming really interesting to the legislature. In 1834, the government obtained from parliament the first grant in aid of education. It was only £20,000; but it was a beginning, and it went on through subsequent years till 1839, when a vote of £30,000 was asked for. The grant was distributed in different proportions through the National School Association, which was in strict connection with the Church of England, and the British and Foreign School Society, which admitted children of all Christian denominations, without imposing upon them

sectarian teaching. The method of distribution was by giving aid to applicants in proportion to the amounts which those applicants could prove themselves able to raise for the building of school-houses. It is obvious at a glance that on this principle aid is given precisely where it is least wanted—to districts which can raise funds for educational purposes, while the poorest and most neglected could proffer no claim. After a few years, the educational committee of the privy-council resolved that the principle of giving most where most could be raised on the spot should not be invariably adhered to, if applications should be made from very poor and populous districts, where subscriptions could not be obtained to a sufficient amount. As to the desolate districts where there was no one to stir at all amidst the deadness of ignorance and poverty—there was no provision made for them. To those that had much, more was to be given; and to those that had less, was less to be given; and to those who had nothing—nothing. One beneficent work which the annual parliamentary grant—still annually disputed, however, and therefore uncertain—enabled the ministers to effect, was the establishment and organisation of a model school, from which might descend long generations of schools for the training of teachers. In 1835, £10,000 was expressly voted by parliament for this object; and in 1839, the committee of privy-council expressed their regret that, owing to the sectarian difficulties of the case, they could not propose a plan for the establishment of a normal school under the care of the state, instead of that of a voluntary association.

Opposition was made at every step. Lord Stanley even declared, in 1839, that the grant of £10,000 for a normal school, in 1835, was made at a late period of the session, when members were not duly vigilant. When, in 1839, an order in council vested the management of the education fund in a committee of privy council, instead of the lords of the treasury, in whose hands it had hitherto been, the sharpest debate, and that which most clearly revealed the difficulties of the case, took place in both Houses, and led to a severe retort from the government. On Lord John Russell moving for the grant, Lord Stanley moved an amendment proposing an address to the sovereign to

rescind the order in council for the appointment of the board of privy-council. A debate which was renewed at intervals for some weeks brought out the views of a variety of members on the whole education question; and the reader sees, with a sort of amazement, that a member here and there set himself to prove that in France there was least crime where ignorance was most dense, and desired the House to infer that the innocence of the masses was in proportion to their inability to read and write. In the Commons, the ministers obtained their grant by a majority of only two; and in the Lords, an address to the sovereign, like that proposed by Lord Stanley, moved by the Archbishop of Canterbury, was carried by a majority of 111. The Lords carried up the address, sincerely believing, no doubt, that they were rescuing their young queen and the state from the guilt and danger of countenancing dissent by permitting any portion of the parliamentary grants to reach the schools of the British and Foreign Society through the hands of members of the privy-council. But they received their rebuke from the clear voice of their young queen, who saw, under the guidance of her ministers, the full enormity of the claim of the Church to engross the education of the nation. There was nothing in the present condition of the people—about Canterbury, for instance, as people were saying—or of the National Schools, to induce a belief that the Church was fulfilling well the function which it claimed; but if it had—if the education in those schools had been as good as it then was proved to be bad, and if the Church had been really educating all who did not expressly belong to dissenting bodies, the claim of the Church, that the government should not countenance and aid the efforts of Dissenters, by sending help through the hands of the privy-council committee, was too monstrous not to be rebuked as it was by the royal reply. The queen was sensible of their Lordships' zeal for religion and the Church; was always happy to have their advice; yet thought it a matter of regret that they should have thought it necessary to offer it now; was deeply aware of her duties to the Church, in sanctioning the very measure in question; reminded their Lordships that by annual reports they would always know what was done by the

committee, and have opportunity for objection or control; and finally, hoped that it would appear that the grants had been expended with strict fidelity to the purposes of parliament, to the rights of conscience, and the security of the Established Church.

The clergy, with few exceptions, henceforth refused to permit participation in these grants; and the quarrel between the Church and the government, in regard to the principles of administration of the grants for education, has been revived, from time to time, and is not settled at this day. One good result of the proceedings of the session of 1839 was that a strong effort was made to extend, and also to improve, the National Schools. The Church party wished to test and bring out the strength of its own body; and also to compensate the clergy who had conscientiously refused participation in the government grants. The chief solace to the observer of these melancholy contentions of bigotry with the needs of the time was in seeing how the Church became roused to some sense of her duty towards the ignorant and the poor, and how the great subject of popular education was at last making its way to the front on the platform of public interests. The struggle with which each step was attended showed, in a stronger light than any one had anticipated, the utter blindness of a large number of educated Protestants, in or outside of the British parliament, to the rights of the universal mind and conscience —of the mind to knowledge, and of the conscience to equal liberty; but the more this blindness was exhibited, the less mischief there was in it, and the more likely were the friends of popular enlightenment to understand and agree how to proceed.

Among these friends of popular enlightenment must certainly be considered the Melbourne administration and that which succeeded it. The Whig ministers made the beginning which has been detailed; and their successors carried out their plan with a zeal and fidelity for which they merited and obtained high honour. By this scheme, the Church was offered the opportunity which she seemed to need for regaining some of the honour she had lost, and retrieving some of the disgrace under which she lay at

this particular period; but she could not accept the opportunity; and while torn more fiercely every year by the conflicts of parties within her own pale—her very bishops being by this time arrayed against each other as favourers or repressors of 'Tractarianism'—she was dissolving the traditional associations of respect and awe in the minds of the nation at large by her practical opposition to popular enlightenment. Such reforms, however, as she permitted in the working of her own affairs were already operating for good; and it is the recorded opinion of some of her highest dignitaries that the preservation of the very existence of the Church of England is owing to the Melbourne administration. Those who may not agree in such an opinion yet, may and do now see that that administration was really most friendly to the Church, precisely in insisting on those measures which the Church most vehemently opposed. If, for one instant, they had yielded to the control of the Church the parliamentary grant for education, they would have done as much for her speedy destruction, as they could have done for her stability and prosperity if they had been able to carry their appropriation principle.

CHAPTER V.

Conduct of the Peers—Peerage Reform—Chartism—Radical Chartists—Tory Chartists—Hungering Chartists—Factious Chartists—Orangeism—Duke of Cumberland—Colonel Fairman—Orange Peers—Plot—Action of Orangeism—Detection—Committee of Inquiry—Mr. Hume's Resolutions—Address to the King—Colonel Fairman's Contumacy—Proposed Prosecution—Death of Haywood—Address to the King—Dissolution of Orangeism.

To the contemplative philosopher, nothing is more striking, throughout the whole range of human life, than the universal tendency of men to overrate the relative importance of the business under their hand. It would be unreasonable to quarrel with this tendency—evidence though it be of human fallibility and blindness; it would be unreasonable to quarrel with it, while human faculties

are what they are—able to work, but slowly, and within a very limited range; because the stimulus of hope and confidence is necessary to impel men to do all that they can; whereas they would sink down in the inaction of discouragement if they could see at the moment the actual proportion that their deeds bear to their needs. Children would never learn to read first, and then would never learn the grammar of a new language, if they were aware beforehand what a language is, and what a work it is to master its structure and its signs; it is by seeing only the page before them, by not looking beyond the task of the hour, that they accomplish the business at last; and it is not till they have become men that they apprehend the philosophy of their achievement, and learn to be grateful that they did not recognise it sooner. Thus it is in the great sphere of politics, where the wisest men are but children, working their way to achievement with more or less of the confidence of simplicity; a simplicity which the ordinary life of man is too short to convert into a power of philosophical retrospect. In the longer life of a nation, this power of philosophical retrospect belongs to a future generation; and it is very interesting to the thoughtful of each generation to contemplate the confident satisfaction of their forefathers in the belief that they had set things straight as they went, and compassed the whole of the business which was under their hand. How complete did the Reformation appear to those who wrought it! How confident were they that Romanism was subordinated to Protestanism for ever! whereas our own time has taught us that the work was not only incomplete, but certainly insecure, and possibly transient. How complete did the Revolution of 1688 appear to those who wrought and witnessed it! How confident were they that good principles of government were firmly established by it! Yet we see how not only those principles might be evaded, but how the most important part of the work, the government of the towns, was left in a state of corruption as dire as all the Stuarts had made it. How complete did the work of Catholic Emancipation appear to those who emancipated the Catholics; and how confidently did they, and their supporters of the liberal party, conclude that

the tranquillisation of Ireland was achieved! Yet the mere use of the terms 'tranquillisation of Ireland' now appears a mockery. To a future generation, the most astonishing part of the whole business will be that the men of 1829 could be such children as thus to overrate the importance of a single act, great as the act might be. Again, how confident were the Whigs of 1832 of the finality of the reform measure; and those who were less childish than this were themselves as childish in supposing that the nation was settled and satisfied for a time—safe at least from revolution; and that further reforms might proceed with regularity, in the midst of security. In a spirit of security, the intelligence of the kingdom prosecuted its work—the government achieving political and social reforms—the Church carrying on ecclesiastical reforms; and the liberal parties, in and out of parliament, proposing and maturing schemes for the orderly and regular removal of abuses and obstructions, as if the deposits of the corruptions and miseries of centuries were not still present in their midst, working towards explosions which might shatter our polity to fragments in a day. Already we begin to see—what will be seen much more clearly a hundred years hence—that those who lived in the years succeeding 1832 were living in times perhaps as perilous as the history of England has to show—amidst a romance of peril as striking, when fully understood, as any of the times of the Plantagenets and the Stuarts. If this statement appears extravagant, it must be because the greater number of quiet Englishmen have not yet contemplated the history of their own time as they would that of another. This is certainly the case with the greater number of us; while some few regard the story of this chapter with a sort of incredulity—a dread of giving way to romance—which disturbs their judgment, and obstructs their perception of the wonder and interest of the too unquestionable tale. It was not that the facts were any secret. They were published in newspapers, in reviews, and in the reports of parliamentary committees and debates. It was that few, in the midst of the pressing business of the time, saw the full significance, or felt the full enormity, of the case; and the few who did, used a

reserve and prudence so uncommon in them as to indicate the depth and force of their own impressions.

It was a time of revolutionary conspiracies; conspiracies to which those of the Castlereagh and Sidmouth times were trifles; conspiracies at both extremes of society—one under the steps of the throne, the other under the shadow of the workhouse. Of them we shall speak presently; but we must first show the reflex agitation of both as apparent in a remarkable movement in an intermediate portion of society.

It is unnecessary to present again the conduct of the majority of the peers during the reform struggle. It is, and ever will be, fresh in men's minds; the disgrace of the bishops above all; and next, the insolence and rancour of the least enlightened of the lay peers. From year to year they protracted the provocation they gave to the people at large, by obstructing and damaging measures of improvement which they could not wholly get rid of. They did this with a rashness which appeared unaccountable, till revelations were made that showed how the most violent of the obstructive peers had reckoned on political changes which should give them justification for the past, and their own way for the future. We have seen how they came to yield the point of parliamentary reform; but it was not known at the time how confidently they expected soon to repeal the Reform Bill. We have seen how they repeatedly extinguished the Irish Church bills sent up by large majorities of the Commons; how fifteen bishops assembled at Lambeth to concert measures for intimidating the ministry; and how the primate began his agitation in the Upper House before the measure was introduced there. We have seen how materially they injured the Municipal Reform Bill, in its principles as well as its details; and how they went up in a crowd to address the sovereign in opposition to a liberal, though extremely small, educational measure, and received their due rebuke. If it were necessary to follow their action, step by step, through the legislation of the time, we should see that these were but a small part of the obstructions opposed by the majority of the Lords to necessary or desirable reforms.

It was not to be expected that the nation would bear this. The question, 'What must be done with the Lords?' so familiar in 1830–32, was not dropped; and a succession of replies to this question was proffered in the other House. Various members there proposed a reform of the House of Lords as a fitting sequel to the reform of their own; and the seriousness with which the question was discussed during the years 1835–37 is rather startling to the reader of the present day, till he remembers the then recent abolition of the hereditary peerage in France, the triumphant reform of our own Lower House, and the insolent attitude of defiance assumed at the time by the Kenyons, Rodens, Wynfords, and Newcastles, who were secretly expecting a speedy restoration of their domination in the state. The most favourable circumstance, perhaps, for them was, that Mr. O'Connell early pledged himself to procure a reform of the House of Lords. On Irish questions, Mr. O'Connell was supremely to be feared by his opponents, but not on questions which must be agitated elsewhere than in Ireland. At the close of the session of 1835, he went on what he called 'a mission' to the north of England and Scotland, to rouse the people to require an elective peerage—the election of a peer, for a term of years, by every 200,000 electors; which would yield a House of 130 peers for the 170 then sitting. He was received and feasted, with acclamations, by large numbers of people at Manchester, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. Yet no visible effect was produced—at least, none to the injury of the cause of the peers; for O'Connell's oratory, so powerful in Ireland, seemed to astonish or amuse, rather than persuade, his English and Scotch audiences. The following seems a fair specimen of his methods of incitement; and no Englishman or Scotchman will wonder that it did not assist the subversion of so time-hallowed an institution as the British House of Peers. On meeting the Edinburgh trades, he said: 'We achieved but one good measure this last session; but that was not our fault; for the 170 tyrants of the country prevented us from achieving more. Ancient Athens was degraded for submitting to thirty tyrants: modern Athens will never allow 170 tyrants to rule over her. . . . It was

stated in one of the clubs, that at one time a dog had bitten the bishop; whereupon a noble lord, who was present, said: "I will lay any wager that the bishop began the quarrel." Now, really the House of Lords began the quarrel with me. They may treat me as a mad dog if they please; I won't fight them; but I will treat them as the Quaker treated the dog which had attacked him. "Heaven forbid," said he, "that I should do thee the slightest injury; I am a man of peace, and I will not hurt thee;" but when the dog went away, he cried out; "Mad dog! mad dog!" and all the people set upon him. Now, that is my remedy with the House of Lords. I am more honest than the Quaker was; for the dog that attacked me is really mad. Bills were rejected in the House of Lords simply because Daniel O'Connell supported them; and I do say, that if I had any twelve men on a jury on a question of lunacy, I would put it to such jury to say if such men were not confirmed madmen. So you perceive the dog is really mad—and accordingly I have started on this mission to rouse the public mind to the necessity of reforming the House of Lords; and I have had 50,000 cheering me at Manchester, and 100,000 cheering me in Newcastle; and I heard one simultaneous cry: "Down with the mad dogs, and up with common sense!" The same cry has resounded through Auld Reekie. The Calton Hill and Arthur's Seat re-echoed with the sound; and all Scotland has expressed the same determination to use every legitimate effort to remove the House of Lords. Though the Commons are with us, yet the House of Lords are against us; and they have determined that they will not concede a portion of freedom which they can possibly keep back. Sir Robert Peel, the greatest humbug that ever lived, and as full of political and religious cant as any man that ever canted in this canting world—feeling himself quite safe on his own dunghill, says that *we* want but one chamber—one House of radical reformers. He knew that in saying this he was saying what was not true. We know too well the advantage of double deliberation not to support two Houses; but they must be subject to popular control; they must be the servants, not the masters, of the people.

It was true that Auld Reekie caught up the sound, and that the Calton Hill and Arthur's Seat re-echoed with the cry. O'Connell had a magnificent reception by the Edinburgh trades and the United Irishmen; and the Calton Hill was covered with a dense mass of the well-dressed inhabitants of the city. 'The reception of O'Connell by the immense assembly,' we are told, 'combined solemnity with enthusiasm.' But the enthusiasm melted away, and the cry died out, without producing any effect on the constitution of the Lords' House. O'Connell could not lead a political reform anywhere but in Ireland, even where, as now, he began with every advantage.

Much more effectual was the action within the walls of the House of Commons, on the ground of the petitions sent up during the mutilation of the Municipal Bill by the peers. On the 2nd of September, Mr. Roebuck declared his intention of moving for leave to bring forward, in the next session, a bill for the removal of the veto possessed by the House of Lords, substituting for this veto a suspensive power which should cause the reconsideration of any measure which the peers should object to, but which suspensive power should not intercept the royal assent to any bill after its second passage through the Commons. Mr. Hume gave notice the same night, that he should move, early in the next session, for a select committee to inquire into the constitution and condition of the House of Peers—who the peers were, how qualified, and how they discharged their duties. Some amusement was caused by Mr. Hume's courageous repudiation of all poetical feeling, and all antiquarian associations, when he complained of 'the farce' of the forms of conference between the Lords and Commons, when the peers were seated and covered, and the Commons standing and bare-headed—'to exchange two bits of paper,' as Mr. Hume said. He saw nothing of the old days which his words called up before the mind's eye of those who heard him; the days when the peers were like princes, each with a little army at his call; and when the unwarlike burgess-representatives really did half worship or tremble before the valorous nobles of the land. It might be time as Mr. Hume thought, to give up forms which had ceased to

contain any truth; but Mr. Hume's way of setting about it amused some people, and shocked others, with the sense that he did not know what he was about. But, before that day twelvemonths, Mr. Hume stood higher than any other man in the House or in the kingdom, in connection with the people's quarrel with the House of Lords. By him, the Lords had, by that time, been humbled, awed, brought to their senses; and this by no vulgar clamour or extreme devices, but by industry, and sagacity, and courage applied in ascertaining and revealing facts which placed the most insolent of the peers at the mercy of the crown and the Commons. Of this matter, however, the members were not generally aware on this 2nd of September 1835; and a third notice of motion was added to those of Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Hume. Mr. Cuthbert Rippon gave notice that, next session, he should ask leave to bring in a bill to relieve the archbishops and bishops from their attendance in the House of Lords.

After the prorogation, the various political parties and leaders were watched with anxiety by the enlightened Liberals of the country, who saw that something must be done to remove the obstructive quality of the peers, if the legislation of the country was to proceed at all, in pursuance of the purposes of the Reform Bill. The ministers were watched. Some of them used strong language on public occasions respecting the recent conduct of the obstructive peers; and on Mr. O'Connell's return to Ireland, after his 'mission' was concluded, he was invited to dine with the lord-lieutenant—an incident which was regarded by the Tory peers as a declaration of war on the part of the viceroy. On the other hand, Lord John Russell made a public and emphatic avowal that he was opposed to all further organic change; and the government newspapers declared, now without comment, and now with expressions of regret, that no views of any important modification of the structure of the Upper House were at present held by the administration. Few of any party doubted that Lord John Russell would learn to see the necessity of reform, by some means or other. There was a strong party in parliament, and a large body of the nation occupied in thinking of what should be

done; and, on the whole, the conclusion, in the autumn of 1835, was that the subject was ripe for discussion; but that it must take more than one session to bring the matter to a practical issue. There were few who imagined how prodigiously the inflation of the insolent section of the peers would have subsided, without danger of organic change, before the close of the next session.

On the 26th of April 1836, Mr. Rippon made his promised motion to release the spiritual peers from their attendance in parliament. It was opposed by Lord John Russell on the plea that it would lead to no practical result. On a division, 53 members voted with Mr. Rippon, and 180 against him. In May, Mr. O'Connell gave notice of his intention to introduce his proposal to make the Upper House elective. Some laughed—laughed in loud shouts; and others were very grave, thinking the matter too serious, in the existing state of affairs, for laughter. One member, Mr. G. Price, wished to move that the notice should be expunged from the notice-book; but here Lord John Russell interposed in defence of the right of the Commons to entertain any proposition for what any member might consider a reform in any branch of the legislature, even if it should extend to regulating the succession of the throne; in which he was clearly supported by historical precedent. Mr. Price withdrew his motion. The question, however, was not brought on, the events of the close of the session rendering any further humiliation of the obstructive peers unnecessary. Sir. W. Molesworth, who knew more of the singular history than almost any one, quietly dropped the motion for peerage reform of which he had given notice for 1837. But the bishops were not yet to be left in peace. Mr. Charles Lushington moved, on the 16th of February, for the exclusion of the spiritual peers from the Upper House, and was ably supported by Mr. Charles Buller, whose opinion was that the bishops had abundant employment elsewhere; that they were seldom prepared to enlighten legislation on subjects which lay peculiarly within their province; and that they were invariably found voting with the minister who gave them their sees. Lord John Russell opposed the motion with the question;

Where, if parliament once began to modify the constitution of the country, would they stop?—How far would they go?—a question which Mr. Buller declared to be easily answered. They would go only as far as the door of the House of Lords, to show the bishops out, and then leave them to go where they pleased. He, who had a great respect for the bishops, thought them most honourably seated in their own dioceses, where they had as much business to do as would quite engross them. On this occasion, 92 members voted with the reforming mover, and 197 against him. One more attack was made on the functions of the peers in May of the same session, when Mr. Duncombe proposed the abolition of the Lords' privilege of voting by proxy. The resolution was thus worded: 'That the practice of any deliberative assembly deciding by proxy upon the rejection or adoption of legislative enactments, is so incompatible with every principle of justice and reason, that its continuance is daily becoming a source of serious and well-founded complaint among all classes of his majesty's subjects.' It was shown that when the practice of voting by proxy began, in the time of Edward I., the proxies were men of lower rank, sent as messengers by the nobles who could not attend in person; and that it was not till the reign of Henry VIII. that the abuse crept in of allowing one peer to represent others. When, in the time of Charles I., the Duke of Buckingham held fourteen proxies, the evil was so evident as to cause an order to be passed that no peer should henceforth hold more than two proxies. In modern days, when legislation has become immediately interesting and important to the great mass of the people, the practice of proxy-voting has become more indefensible than ever; and yet the safeguard was withdrawn of the king's licence being a condition of a peer's absence. Lord Stanley and Sir R. Peel met the argument by likening proxy-voting to the custom of pairing in the Commons. The analogy was shown not to be a true one; and if it had been, the obvious reply would have been: 'Then abolish the custom of pairing, except on individual occasions.' The majority of 48 against the motion was formed by the official Whigs and their dependents, so that

the state of the question appeared by no means desperate. But again, events were occurring which deferred the controversy to a future time.

Such was the course of the mildest of the three 'revolutionary' movements of the period—that in which the sober and educated classes of the community reflected the far more serious agitation which was going forward on either hand.

It was at this period that men who went among the working-classes of the great towns first began to speak of Chartism, Chartists, and the charter. Some in higher ranks now and then asked what the words meant; but too many in every station—especially, too many in the ranks of government—did not look closely into it, but dismissed the matter as a thing low and disagreeable, and sure to come to nothing, from its extreme foolishness. It is the year 1838 before we find the word 'Chartism' in the *Annual Register;* yet, long before that, Chartism had become the chief object in life to a not inconsiderable portion of the English nation. And when it came to be a word in the index of the *Annual Register*, government and their friends regarded it as a 'topic of the day.' When the great national petition, bound with iron hoops, was carried, like a coffin, by four men from its waggon into the House of Commons, ministers and their friends looked upon the show as upon an incident of that vulgar excitement which poor Radicals like or need, as the tippler likes or needs his dram. Reckoning on the fickleness of the multitude, they pronounced that Chartism would soon be extinct; and then, that it was extinct. Their attorney-general, Sir John Campbell, in a sort of declaratory ministerial speech at a public breakfast at Edinburgh, declared Chartism to be 'extinct,' shortly before the Monmouth rebellion. The chief law-officer of the government gloried in the supremacy of loyalty, law, and order, immediately before the breaking out of a long-planned rebellion, of which every possible warning had been given, in the form of preceding riots! The newspapers agreed with the government, and government took its information from the newspapers; and thus, from year to year, was Chartism declared to be extinct, while we, in the present day, have

the amplest evidence that it is as much alive as ever. And, as it is living so long after the announcement that it was dead, so was it living long before it was declared to be born. When government and London were at last obliged to take heed to it, they found that their tares were ready for harvest, and that long ago the enemy had been sowing them while they slept. While they slept, literally as well as metaphorically; for the gatherings and speechifyings had been by torchlight on the northern moors and the Welsh hillsides. There were stirrings certainly as early as the date before us—the years 1835-36.

And what were these stirrings? What was it all about? The difficulty of understanding and telling the story is from its comprehending so vast a variety of things and persons. Those who have not looked into Chartism think that it means one thing—a revolution. Some who talk as if they assumed to understand it, explain that Chartism is of two kinds—physical-force Chartism, and moral-force Chartism—as if this were not merely an intimation of two ways of pursuing an object yet undescribed! Those who look deeper—who go out upon the moors by torchlight, who talk with a suffering brother under the hedge or beside the loom, who listen to the groups outside the union workhouse, or in the public-house among the Durham coal-pits, will long feel bewildered as to what Chartism is, and will conclude at last that it is another name for popular discontent—a comprehensive general term under which are included all protests against social suffering. And thus it was at the date before us, whether or not it be so now.

There were men among the working-classes, sound-headed and sound-hearted, wanting nothing but a wider social knowledge and experience to make them fit and safe guides of their order—some few of them not deficient even in these—who saw that the Reform Bill was, if not a failure in itself, a failure in regard to the popular expectation from it. If it was all that its framers meant it to be, they must give a supplement. A vast proportion of the people—the very part of the nation whose representation was most important to the welfare of the state—were not represented at all. As a sage expressed the matter for

them not long afterwards: 'A reformed parliament, one would think, should inquire into popular discontents *before* they get the length of pikes and torches! For what end at all are men, honourable members and reform members, sent to St. Stephen's with clamour and effort; kept talking, struggling, motioning and counter-motioning? The condition of the great body of people in a country is the condition of the country itself: this you would say is a truism in all times; a truism rather pressing to get recognised as a truth now, and be acted upon, in these times. Yet read Hansard's debates, or the morning papers, if you have nothing to do! The old grand question, whether A is to be in office or B, with the innumerable subsidiary questions growing out of that, courting paragraphs and suffrages for a blessed solution of that—Canada question, Irish appropriation question, West India question, queen's bedchamber question; game-laws, usury-laws; African blacks, hill coolies, Smithfield cattle, and dog-carts—all manner of questions and subjects, except simply this, the alpha and omega of all! Surely honourable members ought to speak of the condition-of-England question too—Radical members, above all; friends of the people; chosen with effort, by the people, to interpret and articulate the dumb, deep want of the people! To a remote observer they seem oblivious of their duty. Are they not there, by trade, mission, and express appointment of themselves and others, to speak for the good of the British nation? Whatsoever great British interest can the least speak for itself, for that beyond all they are called to speak. They are either speakers for that great dumb toiling class which cannot speak, or they are nothing that one can well specify. Alas, the remote observer knows not the nature of parliaments; how parliaments, extant there for the British nation's sake, find that they are extant withal for their own sake; how parliaments travel so naturally in their deep-rutted routine, commonplace worn into ruts axle-deep, from which only strength, insight, and courageous generous exertion can lift any parliament or vehicle; how in parliament, reformed or unreformed, there may chance to be a strong man, an original, clear-sighted, great-hearted, patient and valiant

man, or to be none such.' The men we have spoken of—soon confounded in the group of Chartist leaders—felt and knew such things as Carlyle has here set down for them; felt that parliament had not done what was needed—that the people's story had not been told there—that the 'strong man' had not yet appeared there; and their conclusion was, that they might try and get the duty of parliament better done. They might possibly expect too much from the means they proposed—extension of the suffrage, shortening of parliaments, protected voting, and establishing a control over representatives, and opening a wider field of choice of such, by paying the expenses of their function; they might possibly expect too much from these aims; but it is a libel upon the best class of Chartist leaders to say that they expected from these aims all that they wanted. These men were the heartiest and truest advocates in the country of universal education. They saw more clearly than anybody else, and lamented more deeply, the miseries arising from popular ignorance. They mourned over the murders and vitriol-throwing of the operatives who were enslaved by mercenary delegates; they mourned over the fate of the followers of 'Messiah Thom;' they mourned over the nightly drillings on the heath, with pike and bludgeon; they mourned over the nature of the opposition to the new poor-law, when crowds of thousands of men, who could never be called together again to be disabused, were assured by orators whom they took for educated men, that under the new poor-law every poor man's fourth child was strangled, and that none but the rich were henceforth to have more than three children. They did more than mourn—they spent their hard earnings, their spare hours, their sleeping hours, their health, their repose, to promote the education which the state did not give. By wonderful efforts, they established schools, institutes, lecture and reading rooms, and circulated knowledge among their class in every way they could think of. Such were some of the body soon to be called Chartists—as soon as their political ideas had resolved themselves into the form of a charter which the people might demand. These men were all radical reformers. They saw little to choose between the Tories and the

Whigs. As we again find their ideas expressed for them: 'Why all this struggle for the *name* of a reform ministry? Let the Tories be ministry, if they will; let at least some living reality be ministry! A rearing horse that will only run backward, he is not the horse one would choose to travel on; yet of all conceivable horses the worst is the dead horse. Mounted on a rearing horse, you may back him, spur him, check him, make a little way even backwards; but seated astride of your dead horse, what chance is there for you in the chapter of possibilities?' These men wanted a strong, steady-going progression; and they would have therefore neither the pomp and prancings of Toryism, nor the incapacity of Whiggism. They were radical reformers.

Another set were Tories—Tory agitators who went about to raise the people against the new poor-law, and divert them from the aim of repealing the corn-laws. These men, guilty or stupid, according as they were or were not really the reverends and esquires that the mob believed them to be, were the orators on the moors by torchlight. These were the men who taught in those thronged meetings that the poor-law was a system of wholesale murder; and that no one could blame a poor man who carried a knife in his bosom for the workhouse official who should attempt to part him from his wife. These were the men who represented the whole class of manufacturers as devils who caused children to be tortured in factories for their own amusement; and too often the declamation ended with a hint that the hearers evidently knew how to get torches, and that factories would burn. These were the men who warned their hearers against a repeal of the corn-laws, because these laws were the last restraint on the power of the mill-owners. These rabid and ranting Tories were another class of Chartists.

There were thousands who knew little about themselves except that they were very hungry and miserable. A landed proprietor now and then, here and there, said in the House pretty things about the sun of Christ's natal-day gilding the humble thatch of the labourer at the same moment with the spire of the church and the windows of the mansion—intending to convey that the joyousness

of Christmas was shared by all ranks; while, the very next Christmas, in the very county, the very parish of these orators, the labourers were shivering without fire —cowering under a corner of the decaying thatch which let in snow and rain upon their straw litters—and hungering over the scantiest morsels of dry bread; one neighbour in four or eight, perhaps, having a slice of bacon, and a fire whereon to cook it. Such parishes as these furnished a contingent to the Chartist force—haggard wretches, ready to be called by any political name which might serve as a ticket to better cheer in life than they had found.

Largest of all was the number of those who ought not to have felt themselves under any immediate pressure of wrong at all. There were many thousands of factory operatives, of Welsh, Durham, and Cumberland colliers, and others, who were far from poor, if only they had been wise enough to see their condition as it was. But they were not wise enough; and that they were not, was *their* social wrong. Of these, great numbers had a larger annual income than very many clergymen, half-pay officers, educators, and fundholders, who are called gentlemen; but they did not know how to regard and manage their own case: they reckoned their income by the week instead of by the year, and spent it within the week; had nothing to reply when asked, in a time of prosperity, why they who worked so hard had not mansions and parks like people who did nothing; and, in a pinching time, when hungry and idle at once, with hungry children crying in their cold homes, were too ready to believe, as desired, that every other man's fire, and food, and cheerfulness were so much out of their pockets. By no act of the state could these men have been blessed with higher wages; but if the state would have educated them, they might have found themselves abundantly blessed in their present gains; they might have sat, in their school-days, on the same bench with the curate, and the seaman, and the schoolmaster, and the tradesman, whom they were now envying and hating; and might now have been content, like them, with the position which was 'neither poverty nor riches.' But the state had left them ignorant;

and here they were, drilling on a hillside, and plotting to burn, slay, and overthrow. They had an indistinct but fixed idea that there was unbounded wealth everywhere for everybody, if only there were no tyrants to intercept it: and there can be no wonder in any sympathising mind and heart, that a man in a desolate home, without occupation, and suffering under that peculiar state of brain caused by insufficiency of food, becomes a torch-bearing Chartist, or anything else, however clear it may be that the money he had earned might, if wisely managed, have made him a ten-pound householder, exercising the suffrage, and a capitalist, giving education to his children.

It was but lately that the king's speech had intimated the prosperity of commerce and manufactures, while agriculture was grievously depressed. But already there was some sense abroad of evil to come. Trade slackened and became irregular, and the most sagacious men of business began to apprehend that a new term of commercial distress was setting in. They were right; only their apprehensions did not compass anything like the truth. It is well that they did not; for a mere glimpse of the horrors of the seven years to come would have been too much for the courage of any but the boldest of the enterprising classes of British merchants and manufacturers. Though they saw little, they soon began to feel uneasy, with an uneasiness far transcending any reason that they could give for it. As yet, wages were scarcely lowered, though profits were sensibly sinking; but the employed assumed a new air to their employers, in many a town and factory district in England—a sauciness that seemed to say they felt themselves injured, and were not going to put up with it long. This was the temper which was fast growing into the Chartism of 1839.

But that seven years' distress brought out an opposite class of facts of the most cheering nature, as we shall see under their date. We shall see, hereafter, something of the marvellous and sublime patience of the working-classes under a trial which might well be thought too sore for human endurance. This patience was in precise proportion, and in the clearest connection, with the knowledge by this time gained by the working-class most

concerned—that there is no such thing as an inexhaustible fund of wealth, and that no tyrants were standing between them and comfort. The patient class knew that they had had their share—as shares are at present naturally apportioned; they could and did live for a long series of months on the savings they had made; and when at last they were left bare, they knew that the richest capitalists were sinking too. Of this class many hundreds were Chartists; but they did not carry pikes and torches, to avenge discontents of their own. The people's charter was then in existence; and their aim was to carry that. It would give them, as they believed, a parliament which would understand their case, and cure many evils under which they were suffering. And some had visions of an association of small capitalists, who might defy the fickleness of fortune; and som dreamed of buying a field and being safe and in harbour there, through some wonderful skill and simple arrangements of Chartist leaders. But these were not the revolutionary Chartists who were at work, burrowing in the foundations of society at the date before us. The better class came in later—after the promulgation of the charter—as, indeed, did many of the worst; but, in 1835 and 1836, the boring was begun, and the train was laying, which produced, for one result among many, the explosion at Monmouth in 1839.

The revolutionary movement referred to as occurring at the other end of society was one which it would be scarcely possible to credit now, but for the body of documentary evidence which leaves no shadow of doubt on any of the principal features of the conspiracy. The whole affair appears so unsuited to our own time, and the condition of our monarchy—so like a plunge back into a former century—that all the superiority of documentary evidence of which we have the advantage is needed to make the story credible to quiet people who do not dream of treason-plots and civil war in England in our day.

A month before Sir R. Peel's resignation in the spring of 1835, the Liberal party throughout the country were surprised by the appearance of a sudden fit of captiousness and pertinacity in some of their representatives, in teasing the ministers about the reception of addresses from Orange

societies to the king. From the temper of the time in the House, and especially among the opposition, any captiousness must have been great indeed which could have struck everybody as remarkable. Member after member rose to cross-examine the ministers—who themselves could have hardly understood the proceeding—as to whether the addresses purported to be from Orange societies; whether the king could or ought to receive addresses from associations of declared illegality; whether the replies given had really, as the newspapers said, been avowedly gracious; whether the graciousness had been connected with a recognition of the parties as Orangemen; and finally, and very seriously, whether Mr. Goulburn, as minister of the crown, considered an Orange lodge to be legal or illegal, and whether he was prepared to justify the presentation of an address from such a society to the sovereign. The ministers were probably surprised and perplexed, beginning to see that this was a matter of high importance, but hardly understanding why or how; for no one of them rose for a considerable time. After the dead silence in which the question had been listened to, and the rising of the minister looked for, vociferous cheers from the opposition filled the House when he did not rise. At length Mr. Goulburn made his answer. The reply to the addresses was intended as an acknowledgment of their receipt, and not as any recognition of the legality of the party name by which the signers might designate themselves. Cheering no less loud followed the reply. Perhaps no cheers given in that House—not even those which signalised the passage of the Reform Bill—ever carried such anxiety and pain to the hearts of certain of the Tory peers, and especially of the highest prince of the blood, the eldest of the king's brothers. He and some others of the peers could very well understand what all this might mean, while it was a singular mystery to the country at large.

The country at large knew little about Orange societies, except that the Orangemen in Ireland were proud of their loyalty, and made conspicuous processions on great Protestant occasions, and were ever and anon coming to blows with the Catholics. Orangeism belonged exclu-

sively to Ireland, in the general mind. People generally would have stared to hear that Orangeism was in England, Scotland, and the colonies, and that it constituted an army of itself, in the midst of the military forces of the empire. Orangeism was exclusively Irish at first—in 1795, when it was first heard of. Before that time, the Protestants who patrolled the country, to prevent the seizure of arms by the Catholics in the night, in preparation for their insurrection, bore the name of 'Peep-o'-day Boys.' The Catholics, who organised themselves against these patrolling bands, called themselves 'Defenders,' and soon extended the term to include the defence of 'the united nations of France and Ireland.' As soon as the aim of a union with France was avowed, and a descent of the French upon the coasts of Ireland was expected, the Protestants began to improve and extend their organisation, in the hope of preserving the union with England. They would have taken the title of 'Defenders,' but that their adversaries already bore it. They reverted to the period of the bringing in of a Protestant sovereign over the head of the Catholic James II., and called themselves Orangemen. Such, at least, is the traditionary account in the district where Orangeism sprang up. The Diamond—a little hamlet, about five miles from Armagh, where a conflict took place in 1795, which is called the battle of the Diamond—is assigned as the birthplace of Orangeism. A few yeomen and farmers joined for mutual defence and the assertion of British rights, after the battle of the Diamond; and this was the first Orange lodge. The gentry saw what this might grow to, and encouraged the formation of lodges, and the promulgation of rules. As Presbyterians abounded in that part of the country, they formed the main element of the societies; and it is said that the religious observances of the Orange lodges, which afterwards degenerated into a subject of scandal when Dissenters were no longer admitted, were introduced originally by them. The Orangemen of Ireland were the deadly foes of the 'United Irishmen,' and the most effective check upon them, and they have even claimed the credit of having preserved Ireland to England.

Perhaps it was through the connection of some English noblemen with Irish property that Orange institutions were introduced into England. Lodges were at first held in England under Irish warrants; but in 1808, a lodge was founded in Manchester, and warrants were issued for the holding of lodges under the English authority. On the death of the grand-master at Manchester, the lodge was removed to London, in 1821, and the meetings were held at the house of Lord Kenyon, who was deputy-grand-master. The Duke of York was to have been grand-master; but he found that the law-officers of the crown considered the institution an illegal one. The rules were modified so as to meet the terms of the law. The act which prohibited political societies in Ireland from 1825 to 1828, appeared to dissolve Orangeism there for the time; but lodges were held under English warrants; and in 1828, the whole organisation sprang up, as vigorous as ever, on the expiration of the act. At this time, the entire institution, in Great Britain and Ireland, came under the direction of the Duke of Cumberland, as grand-master. The critical part of the history, as regards England, lies between the years 1828 and 1836. In 1829, when the Duke of York was gone, and the king had given the royal assent to the Emancipation Act, the Orangemen seem to have lost their senses, as they certainly lost their loyalty. The proofs of this which came out in 1835, when the Orangemen on our side the Irish Channel numbered 140,000—40,000 of whom were in London—bewildered the nation with amazement.

In 1828, on the accession of the Duke of Cumberland to the throne of Orangeism, he sent forth, under a commission of the great seal—'given under my seal, at St. James's, this 13th day of August 1828. Ernest, G.M.'—a certain person, chosen 'from a knowledge of his experience, and a confidence in his integrity,' the 'trusty, well-beloved, and right-worshipful brother, Lieutenant-Colonel Fairman.' This person, thus chosen and confided in by the Duke of Cumberland, had a plenary authority, declared in the commission under the great seal of the order, to establish Orangeism wherever he could, and by whatever means he thought proper. He went to Dublin, in order to bring

the Irish and English lodges into one perfect system of secret signs and passwords; and he made two extensive tours in England and Scotland, to visit and establish lodges in all the large towns and populous neighbourhoods where he believed he could bring the people to 'rally round the throne and the Church'—to use the language of the party and the time. The nation at large saw no particular occasion for rallying round the throne, as it seemed to them that the House of Brunswick never was safer. But the Orange leaders, apparently driven frantic by the reforms of the time, were of a different opinion. They actually got it into their heads, at the time when the Duke of Wellington was carrying the Catholic Emancipation Act, and George IV. was evidently sinking, that the Duke of Wellington himself meant to seize the crown. Men laughed when they first heard this, and men will always laugh whenever they hear it; but that such were the apprehensions of the Orange leaders is shown by correspondence in Colonel Fairman's handwriting, which was brought before the parliamentary committee of 1835. The following is an extract from a letter evidently designed for the Grand-master Ernest himself, and written during the last illness of George IV.: 'Should an indisposition, which has agitated the whole country for a fortnight, take a favourable turn—should the Almighty in His mercy give ear unto the supplications that to His heavenly throne are offered up daily, to prolong the existence of one deservedly dear to the nation at large—a divulgement I have expressed a willingness to furnish would be deprived of no small portion of its value. Even in this case, an event, for the consummation of which, in common with all good subjects, I obtest the Deity, it might be as well your royal highness should be put in possession of the rash design in embryo, the better to enable you to devise measures for its frustration; at any rate, you would not then be taken by surprise, as the nation was last year, but might have an opportunity of rallying your forces and of organising your plans for the defeat of such machinations as might be hostile to your paramount claims. Hence, should the experiment be made, and its expediency be established, your royal high

ness would be in a situation to contend for the exercise in your own person of that office at which the wild ambition of another may prompt him to aspire.' Who this 'other' was is plainly expressed in two subsequent letters. It was Wellington!—the devoted Wellington, who perilled his reputation for consistency, and what his party call political honour, over and over again, rather than 'desert his sovereign.' Wellington lived to have this said of him by a man claiming to be a colonel in his own 'perfect machine' of an army. In a letter from Fairman to Sir James Cockburn, in which he gives a most imposing account of the numbers and discipline of the Orange forces in Ireland and Great Britain, he speaks of grovelling worms who dare to vie with the omnipotence of Heaven; and of one among them he writes thus: 'One, moreover, of whom it might ill become me to speak but in terms of reverence, has nevertheless been weak enough to ape the coarseness of a Cromwell, thus recalling the recollection to what would have been far better left in oblivion. His seizure of the diadem, with his planting it upon his brow, was a precocious sort of self-inauguration.' This seems a subject for fun—for a caricature of the day—so admirably is the charge in opposition to all the Duke of Wellington's tendencies; but there were some things in connection with this matter too serious to be laughed at. At the first hint of treason, men were roused to indignation on behalf of the good-natured King William, of whom it had been in contemplation to dispose so easily; and much more strongly did their affections spring to guard from insult and injury the fatherless young princess whose rights were thus dealt with by that trusty and well-beloved brother Fairman, whom the Duke of Cumberland sent forth as his representative. On this letter being published, people began to understand the strange proceedings, and the violence of the debate about a regency, after the accession of William IV. And on this letter being published, people began to remember how, from one occasion to another, rumours of the insanity of King William came floating abroad from the recesses of Toryism, till exploded by contact with free air and daylight. The letter is dated April 6, 1830—during the last illness of

George IV.—and it is addressed to the editor of the *Morning Herald:*

'DEAR SIR—From those who may be supposed to have opportunities of knowing "the secrets of the castle," the king is stated to be by no manner in so alarming a state as many folks would have it imagined. His majesty is likewise said to dictate the bulletins of his own state of health. Some whisperings have also gone abroad, that in the event of the demise of the crown, a regency would probably be established, for reasons which occasioned the removal of the next in succession from the office of high-admiral. That a maritime government might not prove consonant to the views of a military chieftain of the most unbounded ambition, may admit of easy belief; and as the second heir-presumptive is not alone a female, but a minor, in addition to the argument which might be applied to the present, that in the ordinary course of nature it was not to be expected that his reign could be of long duration, in these disjointed times it is by no means unlikely a vicarious form of government may be attempted. The effort would be a bold one, but after the measures we have seen, what new violations should surprise us? Besides, the popular plea of economy and expedience might be urged as the pretext, while aggrandisement and usurpation might be the latent sole motive. It would only be necessary to make out a plausible case, which, from the facts on record, there could be no difficulty in doing, to the satisfaction of a pliable and obsequious set of ministers, as also to the success of such an experiment.—Most truly yours, W. B. F.'

There is nothing to wonder at now in the pertinacity with which the opposition questioned the Peel ministry about Orange addresses. Mr. Hume had got hold of these letters of 1830–31, and the members who cheered so loudly on the perplexity of the ministers, were aware how the loyal Orangemen had listened to suggestions for making the Duke of Cumberland king, to prevent the usurpation of the crown by the Duke of Wellington—for expecting that William IV. would be superseded on an allegation of insanity, and the Princess Victoria because she was a

woman, and probably still a minor. If the Orangemen, with all their importance of rank, wealth and numbers—with their array of British peers, and their army of 140,000 men, avowedly ready for action—could have shown that they did not listen to such suggestions, and that Colonel Fairman was a crack-brained adventurer, with whose wild notions they had no concern, they would assuredly have done so. But it was impossible; the proof was too strong the other way. The letters cited above were written in 1830-31; and a long array of correspondence shows that the trusted and beloved William Blennerhassett Fairman lost no ground with the heads of the party by his speculations. Some of the most offensive suggestions were set forth in 'a series of essays,' written at the request of a noble lord, for that noble lord's information—that noble lord being Lord Kenyon; and these essays were handed over to the Duke of Cumberland, who kept them by him. In December 1831, and in January 1832, Colonel Fairman had long and confidential conversations with the Duke of Cumberland at Kew; and there were more such interviews in February. On the 19th of the next April, Colonel Fairman was unanimously elected to the most important office in the society—that of deputy-grand-secretary; the present Duke of Buckingham being secretary. Colonel Fairman was nominated by the Duke of Cumberland, seconded by Lord Kenyon, and supported by the Duke of Gordon. In June, Colonel Fairman went forth on his mission among the lodges, furnished by the Duke of Cumberland with powers so extensive as to render it a serious and difficult matter to draw up his commission.

It is under this date that Lord Londonderry appears on the scene. Before leaving London on this mission, Colonel Fairman learned from the lips of the Duke of Cumberland, as he declared, that he had written to Lord Londonderry on Orange affairs, and Colonel Fairman therefore wrote with more explicitness, he says, than he should otherwise have done. The subject is establishing Orange clubs among the pitmen on the estates of the marquis; and his lordship's agent and Colonel Fairman had already been consulting about it. Considering the 'popish cabinet and demo-

cratical ministry,' with which the country was oppressed, Colonel Fairman thought fit to suggest in this letter: 'By a rapid augmentation of our physical force, we might be able to assume a boldness of attitude which should command the respect of our Jacobinical rulers. . . . If we prove not too strong for such a government as the present is, such a government will soon prove too strong for us; some arbitrary step would be taken in this case, for the suspension of our meetings. Hence the necessity for our laying aside that non-resistance, that passive obedience, which has hitherto been religiously enforced, to our own discomfiture.' He further relates how he was reproached by Lord Longford, in a long conversation, the day before, for the tameness of the British Orangemen, while the Irish were resolved to resist all attempts to put them down. In a short letter, a few days afterwards, he says he writes to supply an omission—he had forgotten to say that the Orange leaders had the military with them: 'We have the military with us, as far as they are at liberty to avow their principles and sentiments; but since the lamented death of the Duke of York, every impediment has been thrown in the way of their holding a lodge.' It will be remembered that the Duke of York withdrew from his intended position of grand-master on being assured of the illegality of the association. We have the answer of the Marquis of Londonderry to the above letters; the purport of which is that he had consulted Lord Kenyon, who hoped to convince the Duke of Cumberland that 'the moment had not arrived,' owing to the refractory state of the pitmen, and the Whig temper of the county; but, says the last sentence, 'I will lose no opportunity of embracing any opening that may arise.' Lord Londonderry admitted in the House of Lords all the facts of this correspondence, only explaining that the Duke of Cumberland's wishes were made known to him through Lord Kenyon, and not by interview or letter. In the same month of August in which his commission bears date, there is a letter of Fairman's to the Duke of Gordon, in answer to an invitation to Gordon Castle, in which he anticipates that 'we shall be assuming, I think, such an attitude of boldness as will strike the foe with awe; but we inculcate the doc-

trine of passive obedience and of non-resistance too religiously by far.' He has letters, he says, written 'in the highest spirits,' from Lords Kenyon and Londonderry, Longford and Cole; and he declares his expectation of an approaching crisis. It was after all this that he still went to Kew, and 'was closeted three hours' with his royal highness. It was after these things—namely, on October 24 of the same year—that Lord Wynford wrote to Colonel Fairman in praise of the Duke of Cumberland, and that 'the Tories have not been sufficiently grateful to him;' winding up with the following words: 'As you are so obliging in your last letter as to ask my advice as to whether you should pursue the course you have so ably begun, I can only say that you must exercise your discretion as to the company in which you make such appeals as that which I have seen reported. When you meet only sure Tories, you may well make them feel what they owe to one who is the constant, unflinching champion of the party, and who, by his steady course, has brought on himself all the obloquy that a base, malignant faction can invent.' Colonel Fairman quoted Lord Wynford and Lord Kenyon to each other as consulted by him, 'on the propriety of my continuing to introduce the duke's name in the prominent shape I had previously done.' 'If he [the duke] would but make a tour into these parts,' continues the colonel, 'for which I have prepared the way, he would be idolised.' By 'these parts' he means Doncaster, whose maudlin loyalty—such loyalty as he saw—the tears of the gentlemen, which made him 'play the woman'—the enthusiasm of the 'noble dames,' whom he compliments with the title of 'the blue belles of Yorkshire'—is described in a letter too absurd to have been penned by the confidential agent of princes and lords on the gravest political matters. It was a grave affair to the private interests of some of the brethren, if we may judge by a letter of Lord Kenyon's to Colonel Fairman, in January 1833. 'The good cause,' writes his lordship, 'is worth all the help that man can give it, but our only trust must be in God. In the last two years and a half I shall have spent, I suspect, in its behalf nearer £20,000 than £10,000.' We find the Orange peers continuing

their confidence to Colonel Fairman up to the time of the demand of a parliamentary committee. Lord Roden writes to him about 'our cause.' Lord Kenyon confides to him his views of the comparative influence of some Scotch peers, and observes: 'It is a great pity, too, that the amiable Duke of Buccleuch does not see the immense importance of his sanctioning such a cause as the Orange cause.' Lord Thomond writes to him about his subscription in England and Ireland. Lord Wynford reports to him, in April 1834, a private consultation between the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Kenyon, and himself, about the purchase of a newspaper, and declares it highly probable that something would soon be done about it by the Carlton Club. Another 'sound paper, as well as the *Morning Post*,' was wanted; and the *Age* had previously been thought of; its 'scurrility' and 'looseness of principle' being admitted, but Lord Kenyon not admitting, 'as some do, that the private characters of public men ought to be considered sacred against all attack.' This newspaper, the *Age*, was at that precise date occupying itself, week by week, with exhibiting the personal infirmities and peculiarities of the Whig ministers—the baldness, the lameness, the nervous twitchings, the short-sightedness, and so on. Lord Kenyon seems to have considered these things as belonging to private character—'not to be considered sacred against all attack.' But the subject of the moralities of the Orange leaders is too large a one to be entered upon here. The gleanings which might be made from the evidence of the report would afford material for a curious inquiry into the theory of Christianity, held by men whose boast—by the mouth of Lord Kenyon—was: 'Ours is the cause of all friends of Christianity;' and whose most Christian hope was of 'the arrival of a day of reckoning,' when certain 'hell-hounds' would 'be called on to pay the full penalty of their cold-blooded tergiversations.' So late as July 27, 1834, we find the Duke of Gordon confiding to Colonel Fairman his gladness 'that the unprincipled ministers remain to do more mischief; as yet we are not ready for a change.' It is clear that there could be no attempt on the part of the Orange leaders to repudiate Colonel Fairman as their

confidential agent; and when all this correspondence, and much more, was laid before the parliamentary committee, it became a matter of serious consideration how to proceed.

There was much more behind. It was important to know what was 'the prominent shape' that the agent gave to the name of the Duke of Cumberland, in his assemblages of Orangemen, throughout his tour. It was charged upon Fairman, by an Orangeman of the name of Haywood, that he had sounded his hearers at Sheffield and elsewhere on their willingness to support the Duke of Cumberland as their sovereign, if, as was probable, William IV. should be deposed for his assent to the Reform Bill. Colonel Fairman denied this; but his word did not go for much with those who had read his correspondence, nor with any who knew that it had been proved in a court of justice that he had given a false address to get rid of a troublesome creditor.

Again, it was discovered that of the 381 lodges existing in Great Britain, 30 were in the army; and that lodges existed among the troops at Bermuda, Gibraltar, Malta, Corfu, New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and our North American colonies. The Duke of Cumberland and Lord Kenyon positively asserted that they were ignorant of the fact of the existence of an Orange organisation at all in the army. But in the correspondence we find Lord Kenyon writing to the colonel: 'His royal highness promises being in England a fortnight before parliament assembles. To him, privately, you had better address yourself about your military proposition, which to me appears very judicious.' Again, 'The statement you made to me before, and respecting which I have now before me particulars from Portsmouth, should be referred to his royal highness, as military matters of great delicacy. At the same time, private intimation, I submit, should be made to the military correspondents, letting them know how highly we esteem them as brethren.' Again, 'If you hear anything further from the military districts, let his royal highness know all particulars fit to be communicated.' So much for Lord Kenyon's ignorance of Orangeism in the army! But there was, as regarded the duke, more direct evidence in the records of the lodge-meetings at

which he presided, and himself granted new warrants to soldiers present, some of which are actually entitled 'military warrants.' The military lodges were entered in the books, noticed by the circular-reports of the meetings where the Duke of Cumberland presided; and the laws and ordinances, containing provisions for attracting soldiers and sailors by a remission of the fees, are declared to have been inspected and approved by the duke, and handed over to Lord Kenyon for final supervision. Thus it is not wonderful that the committee reported: 'That they find it most difficult to reconcile statements in evidence before them, with ignorance of these proceedings on the part of Lord Kenyon, and by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland.'

Such was the dealing of these loyal leaders with the army. As for the Church, they had the bishop of Salisbury for lord prelate and grand-chaplain of the order; and there were twelve or thirteen deputy grand-chaplains, and clergymen as masters of lodges and managers of their affairs. Not a single minister of religion out of the Establishment belonged to the order in England. The religious observances, conducted by the clergymen, bore but too close a resemblance to the mummeries of the poor Dorsetshire labourers; as did the proceedings altogether, in their illegality. In one of the circulars, the clergy are invited to come in, and take appointments, with the notification that no salary was attached to office, but that it might lead to patronage. In one of these circulars, the position of the Church, in the eyes of Orangemen of the period, is described in language too indecent for quotation. As for the rest, the grand lodge declared itself possessed of 'the facility of knowing the principles of every man in the country:' the institution excluded Roman Catholics and Dissenters, and included the most violent and unscrupulous of the peers; it numbered 140,000 actual members in Great Britian, and 175,000 in Ireland; it expelled members who voted for liberal candidates: it proposed the employment of physical force within a proximate time, to overthrow the liberal institutions which had just been gained; it was beginning to interfere with the common duties and rights of men—as when a lodge of pitmen in

Scotland expelled a body of Catholics 'who had before lived and worked with them in peace and harmony;' and, at the latest date, it was found holding out threats to the half-pay of the army and navy, to draw them to itself in preference to other political unions. 'It is the bounden duty of such [pensioners and disbanded soldiers], in a crisis of danger like the present [February 1835], to enlist under the banners of a loyal association, instead of repairing to factious unions, no less hostile to sound policy than to true religion, at the imminent risk of incurring a just forfeiture of their hard-earned remunerations, of which a scrupulous government would not hesitate to deprive them. Of this intelligible hint the half-pay of the army and navy might do well to profit, in a prospective sense.'

Such was the institution—the great conspiracy against the national will and national interests—the conspiracy against the rights of all, from the king on the throne to the humblest voter, or soldier, or sailor, or Dissenter, or Catholic—which was discovered by the energy and diligence of Mr. Hume in 1835. Such as has been related was the information of which minds were full, on the opposition side of the House, when that scene of pertinacity was transacted which perplexed all who did not yet understand the case. The simple-minded king had been receiving, with studied graciousness, addresses from these illegal societies, in which the question of his deposition had certainly been agitated. The question was now, what should be done?

The seriousness of the question, and of the whole case, was relieved by the certainty, speedily obtained, that the institution, with its political objects, its signs and passwords, and its oaths, was illegal. There was some reluctance, here and there, to admit the illegality; but the opinion of the most eminent lawyers soon settled the matter. It might be fortunate, too, that the seriousness of the case was relieved by the touches of the comic which we have encountered—the Duke of Wellington, of all people, crowning himself with the diadem; and the Doncaster loyalists—the 'blue belles of Yorkshire' smiling, and their fathers and brothers weeping, over that hero of romance, the Duke of Cumberland; and the style, both of

letters and circulars, which must come in among the comic incidents of the case. The extreme silliness of the conspirators—a fair set-off, as it appears to us, against the ignorance of the Dorsetshire labourers—was another fortunate alleviation of the seriousness of the case; though it is no light matter to see so great a number of men—some powerful through rank and wealth—playing the fool, and compelled virtually to petition to be thought fools, as the only alternative from the reputation of traitors. With all its nonsense, and looked at from any pinnacle of superiority, this was a very serious matter. How was it to be dealt with?

The first thing done was obtaining a committee of inquiry in the Commons, within three weeks after the scene of pertinacious questioning with which the revelations began. Before the committee had reported, portions of the evidence were published in the newspapers; and several people, besides Mr. Hume, thought that no time was to be lost in exposing and annihilating the illegal practice of maintaining political societies in the army. Amidst many complaints of his proceeding before the committee had reported, Mr. Hume moved eleven resolutions, on the 4th of August, declaratory of the facts of Orangeism, of its illegality in the army, according to the general orders issued by the commander-in-chief, in 1822 and 1829; and ending with a proposal of an address to the king, calling his attention to the whole subject, and especially to the Duke of Cumberland's share in the illegal transactions complained of. Mr. Hume's opponents alleged that the military warrants must have been misapplied without the knowledge of the chief officers of the association, whose signatures were given to blank warrants, in order to their being sent out in parcels of a hundred or two, in the confidence that they would be properly employed; and also, they declared that Orangeism in the army was a purely defensive measure, against Ribbon societies, and other secret associations, whose suppression they required, if Orange lodges were put down. To this there could be no objection in any quarter. The last of Mr. Hume's resolutions was objected to as conveying, inevitably, more or less censure on the Duke of Cumberland—a proceeding

which could not be justified before the delivery of the committee's report and evidence. Lord John Russell, who had to act and speak for the government in the Lower House, went through this affair with eminent prudence, courage, and moderation. The Whig administrations had been blamed by some parties in the House for supineness in permitting the pranks of the Orangemen for so long; and it was alleged that they had thought the organisation too formidable to be meddled with, during a season of political transition. It might be so. Certainly, the prudence, quietness, and guarded moderation of Lord John Russell throughout the whole transaction conveyed an impression that the affair was, in his view, one of extreme gravity, though he did not say so, but rather made as light of it as circumstances would permit. He now moved that the debate should be adjourned to the 11th of August—that is, for a week—giving a broad hint to the Duke of Cumberland to use the time in withdrawing himself from all connection with the Orange Association.

The duke did not take the hint. He merely wrote and published a letter to the chairman of the committee, in which he denied having ever issued warrants to soldiers, or known of such being issued—declared that he had declined sending out military warrants, on the ground of their violation of the general orders of 1822 and 1829—and intimated that all warrants inconsistent with those orders should be annulled. How the duke's denial was regarded by the committee, we have already seen, in a sentence of their report. Lord J. Russell had shown his prudence in the debate of the 4th; now, on the 11th, he showed his courage. He declared his impression that the duke had not done what the House had a right to expect from him. If the duke had merely signed blank warrants, and his Orange brethren had betrayed his confidence in filling them up in a manner which he was known to disapprove, the least he could have done would be to withdraw himself at once, and in a conspicuous manner, from persons who had so deceived him; but the duke appeared to have no intention of so withdrawing. Mr. Hume's last resolution was therefore agreed to, with the omission of the assertion at the end that the warrants were designed for

the establishment of Orange lodges in the army. On the 15th, the king's reply was read to the House. It promised the utmost vigilance and vigour in suppressing political societies in the army. On the 19th, the House was informed that Colonel Fairman had refused to produce to the committee a letter-book which he acknowledged to be in his possession, and which was essential to the purposes of the committee. He was called before the House, where he repeated his refusal; was advised by some of the Orange members to yield up the book; persisted in his refusal; and was admonished by the speaker that he must obey the orders of the House. On the 20th, as it appeared that he was still contumacious, it was ordered that he should be committed to Newgate, for a breach of privilege; but by this time he had disappeared. The book was really much wanted. It was known to contain replies to letters in the hands of the committee on the establishment of Orange lodges in certain regiments at Gibraltar and elsewhere, and must afford information on the proceedings of the Orange missionary, named Uccalli, who had complained of the difficulty of establishing Orange lodges among the troops in the Ionian Islands, from the vigilant resistance of Lord Nugent and the other authorities. The committee earnestly desired to have the book; and it was moved that the House should order Colonel Fairman's papers to be searched. It was believed that the house had this power; but, considering the odium of exercising it, and the probability that where Colonel Fairman was secreted, there were all his important papers likewise, it was thought best not to issue the order.

Next, it was ascertained, by certain parties determined to carry this matter through, that the case of the Orange leaders was analogous to that of the Dorsetshire labourers. They had become liable under the same law; and it was now resolved that, if evidence could be obtained, the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Kenyon, the Bishop of Salisbury, and others, and Colonel Fairman, should be brought to trial before the Central Criminal Court. The prosecutors got hold of Haywood, the Orangeman who had taken fright at Fairman's incitements to treason, had made them known, and was prosecuted for libel in consequence. It was clear

to the committee that the evidence bore out Haywood's statements; and those who were about to prosecute the Orange leaders appointed counsel for Haywood's defence—the counsel retained being Serjeant Wilde, Mr. Charles Austin, and Mr. Charles Buller. For the prosecution, the most eminent counsel were retained: the indictments were drawn, notwithstanding the difficulty of assigning the exact title of the Duke of Cumberland; the evidence was marshalled; the original letters were arranged; and all was prepared, when two events happened which rendered further proceedings unnecessary.

Poor Haywood died through apprehension. He felt himself the probable victim of the great association whose power he well knew, and whose wrath he had brought upon himself; and he was not yet aware of the powerful protection to be extended over him, when he broke a blood-vessel, through agitation of mind. It was then too late to save him; and he died a few days before the trial was to have come on. The other cause of delay was a request from Mr. Hume that all proceedings should be stayed till after the debate which he was to bring on in the Commons. It was all important that that debate should take place; and the House would refuse the opportunity, if the subject was at the same time in course of inquiry in a criminal court.

On the 23rd of February 1836, Mr. Hume, to whom the country owed more than to any other man in regard to the exposure and annihilation of this great conspiracy, made a complete revelation of the whole matter, ending with a tremendous resolution. This resolution declared the abhorrence of parliament of all such secret political associations, and proposed an address to the king, requesting him to cause the discharge of all Orangemen, and members of any other secret political associations, from all offices, civil and military, unless they should retire from such societies within one month from the publication of a proclamation to that effect. Lord John Russell, in a speech of as much prudence as manliness, proposed a somewhat milder proceeding—an address to the king, praying that his majesty would take such measures as should be effectual for the suppression of the societies in question. The Orangemen in the House were prudent, and offered

no opposition. Lord John Russell's resolution was unanimously agreed to. Two days afterwards, the royal reply, echoing the resolution, was received. The home secretary transmitted a copy of it to the Duke of Cumberland, as grand-master of the Orange Association. The Duke of Cumberland immediately sent a reply, intimating that, before the last debate in the Commons, he had recommended the dissolution of Orange societies in Ireland, and that he would immediately proceed to dissolve all such societies elsewhere. In a few days the thing was done; and Orangeism became a matter of history.

The quietness with which it was done at last is one of the most striking features of the case. The prudence of all parties now appears something unsurpassed in our history. It is the strongest possible evidence of the universal sense of danger in the leaders of all parties. The Orange chiefs had at last become aware of what they had subjected themselves to. Yet their forces were so great—their physical force, restrained by no principle, no knowledge, and no sense, on the part of the chiefs—that it was not safe to drive them to resentment or despair; and the government had also to consider Ireland, and the supreme importance of leaving a fair field there for trial of their new policy of conciliation under Lord Mulgrave and his coadjutors. The radical reformers in parliament felt this as strongly as the ministers. The great point of the dissolution of Orange societies was gained; and the chiefs of the radical reform party contented themselves with holding out emphatic warnings to the humbled conspirators whom they held in their power. They let these revolutionary peers know that there were rumours afloat of the reconstitution of Orangeism under another name; that the Orangemen were watched; that the evidence against the leaders was held in readiness for use; that the law which had transported the Dorsetshire labourers could any day be brought to bear upon them; and that no mercy was to be expected if the public safety should require it to be put in operation.

As for the people at large, the greatness of the affair was little understood among them, from the quietness with which it was brought to a close. A multitude scarcely

heard of it, except as of the ordinary party conflicts of the day. Many more did not, and could not, fully believe what was before their eyes. It was like a story of a long-past century; and now, such persons look upon it, when the facts are revived, as at a new disclosure which fills them with wonder. There were enough, however, sensible and awake to what the kingdom had escaped, to understand the comparative smoothness with which affairs proceeded henceforth in the House of Lords, the sudden silence about reform of that House, and the intense satisfaction with which the departure of the Duke of Cumberland was witnessed, when, in the next year, the accession of a female sovereign to the throne of England sent him away to be King of Hanover.

CHAPTER VI.

Ireland from 1835–1840—Various Theories—Religious Rancour—Distrust of Law—Principle of Government—Political Corruption—Municipal Deterioration—Uncertainty of Subsistence—Fundamental Difficulty—Insecurity of Title to Land—Impartiality to Sects—Ribbonmen and Orangemen—Catholics in the Jury-box—National Education—Impartiality of Law—Decrease of Crime—The Viceroy's Clemency—Thomas Drummond—Reform of Constabulary—Of Magistracy—Prevention of Crime—Repression of Crime—Government by Functionaries or by Apostles—The Queen—O'Connell—Father Mathew—Temperance Movement—The Franchise and Registration—Lord Stanley's Registration Bill—The Government Bill—Failure of both—Political Education—Municipal Reform—The Measure—Certainty of Maintenance—O'Connell on the Poor-law—Question of a Poor-law—History of the Measure—Its early Operation—Resignation of Lord Normanby—Whig Government of Ireland.

It is natural to shrink from the task now before us, of contemplating Ireland at the commencement and during the term of Lord Mulgrave's (presently Lord Normanby's) administration. It is natural now to turn away in heart-sickness when the records under the eye bring up again the high hopes, and the no less flattering fears, of the time; when the ear catches again the echoes of the strife

and tumult of those few years when bigotry was in terror or despair, when the oppressed were uttering blessings, and the advent of hope was like the awakening of the thousand voices of the spring after wintry tempests were gone, and when the loud, clear master-tone of justice made itself heard over all. It is natural to recoil from the thought of that critical period, when all, of every party, believed that a new age had set in for Ireland, and that she was henceforth to grow into the likeness of England from century to century. Under the hourly pressing sense of what Ireland is now—under the bitter and humbling disappointment of all hopes, and the visitation of new fears which are but too like despair—it is natural to look into the past with shrinking and pain. But there is something in the spirit of history as cordial and cheering under passages of humiliation and disappointment as there is admonitory and chastening in times of hope and triumph. Stern as is the spirit of history in rebuking presumption, and showing up the worthless character of transient victories, and pointing out the inevitable recurrence of human passion and folly, in high places and in low, with all the mournful consequences of such frailty —exactly in the same proportion is she genial and consoling in an adverse season—pointing out the good that underlies all evil, shedding hope upon the most ghastly perplexities, and cheerfully teaching us how to store up all our past experience as material for a deeper knowledge and a wiser action than we were qualified for in our time of highest confidence. As a matter of curiosity or re-creation, no one would revert to Ireland, between the years 1835 and 1840; but when, in the course of historical survey, it becomes necessary to contemplate this province of our experience, it is found that far healthier and happier feelings arise to succeed and modify those of disappointment and distress. It is true that we look back upon the wisest and most earnest men then active in that field as upon children planting and watering, and setting their gardens to rights in a new burst of sunshine, while we, from the summit of futurity, perceive how the water-spout is hurrying on which is to tear up everything, and leave all waste; but we see also that the more complete is

the waste, the more thorough will be the renovation; and that perhaps the giddy and wrangling children may come back to their work with a better knowledge, and a more rational expectation.

When it appeared that Catholic emancipation had not tranquillised Ireland, the opponents of that emancipation were occupied with their triumph, and with their preparations to keep down the Catholics by all means, political and social, yet left in their power; but the advocates of the emancipation were driven to consider why it was that the measure appeared to have done so little. Presently might be seen a number of men, and of sets of men, each of whom had an idea about the true Irish woe and its remedy. There was much truth in almost every one of these ideas; and great wisdom and virtue in many of the men who acted upon them. But none of them had got to the bottom of the matter; and of the very few men in the kingdom who had insight into the real state of the case, there appears to have been no one who dared openly and emphatically to speak his thought.

Some thought that Ireland could never prosper while religious rancour prevailed as it did; and that all would be well if this rancour could be gradually discharged from the Irish mind. These advocated the extinction of tithe, the reduction of the Church, the impartial distribution of office among Catholics and Protestants, the discountenance of Orangeism, and the establishment of the government plan of national education. There was weighty truth in all this; but when its advocates looked for the redemption of Ireland by these means, they were wrong.

Some thought that the fatal mischief was the distrust and dislike of the law among the Irish people; and these believed the true remedy to lie in winning over O'Connell from his pernicious teachings of illegality and chicanery, and in appointing a viceroy and staff of officials, whose first care should be to administer with the strictest justice the ordinary powers of the law; who should reform the justiciary of all Ireland, and institute that practical education in simple legality in which the Irish people were conspicuously deficient. There was weighty truth in this;

but when its advocates looked to such a policy for the redemption of Ireland, they were wrong.

Some dwelt on the undisputed difference between the Irish and the English character; and especially on the constitutional tendency to illegality which they believed they recognised in the Celtic race; and urged that the true method of governing the Irish was not by the English method, but by an affectionate despotism. They pointed to O'Connell, as the virtual sovereign of Ireland, and asked what might not be hoped from sending over a popular viceroy, whose love of the Irish should make his relation to them that of a chieftain to his retainers; whose empire, in short, should be like that of O'Connell in kind while the safeguards of sincerity and honour should be added to the popular qualifications of the great demagogue. There might be much truth in this, valuable if urged antecedently to the annexation of Ireland, but of no practical avail towards her immediate redemption.

Some believed gross political corruption to be the chief curse, and proposed a registration of voters as a means for the discouragement of political profligacy. The men of this one idea pursued it with such energy as to show that they really did expect, from the restriction, and regulation, and ascertainment of the franchise, the redemption of Ireland.

Others believed that political principle and knowledge were to be obtained only through political training, and that the reform of municipal institutions was even more important for Ireland than for England and Scotland. They dwelt upon the great truths involved in the recommendation of municipal over central government; and quoted De Tocqueville, where he says, as if he were describing the Irish people: 'In certain countries of Europe the natives consider themselves as a kind of settlers—the greatest changes are effected without their concurrence, and without their knowledge; nay, more, the citizen is unconcerned as to the condition of his village, the police of his street, the repairs of the church, or of the parsonage; for he looks upon all these things as unconnected with himself, and as the property of a powerful stranger whom he calls the government. He has

only a life-interest in these possessions, and he entertains no notions of ownership or of improvement. This want of interest in his own affairs goes so far, that if his own safety or that of his children is endangered, instead of trying to avert the peril, he will fold his arms, and wait till the nation comes to his assistance. This same individual, who has so completely sacrificed his own freewill, had no natural propensity to obedience: he cowers, it is true, before the pettiest officer, but he braves the law with the spirit of a conquered foe, as soon as its superior force is removed; his oscillations between servitude and licence are perpetual. When a nation has arrived at this state, it must either change its customs and its laws, or perish; the source of public virtue is dry; and though it may contain subjects, the race of citizens is extinct. . . . How can a populace, unaccustomed to freedom in small concerns, learn to use it temperately in great affairs? What resistance can be offered to tyranny in a country where every private individual is impotent, and where the citizens are united by no common tie? Those who dread the licence of the mob, and those who fear the rule of absolute power, ought alike to desire the progressive growth of provincial liberties. . . Local assemblies of citizens constitute the strength of free nations. Town meetings are to liberty what primary schools are to science—they bring it within the people's reach; they teach men how to use and enjoy it. A nation may establish a system of free government; but without the spirit of municipal institutions, it cannot have the spirit of liberty.' 'Here,' said the advocates of municipal reform in Ireland—'here we have before us the straight road to the redemption of Ireland. Every one knows that her natural resources are abundant for the wants of her inhabitants, if only her inhabitants knew how to use them. This is the way to teach them—this is the way to call out and increase such public virtue as exists. It is not by an affectionate despotism, but by a training to self-government, that the Irish must be redeemed. Their own affectionate despot himself says, that purified municipal institutions will become "normal schools of peaceful agitation;" we shall

find them normal schools of political and social intelligence and virtue, and by them Ireland may at last be redeemed.' In this faith—to a considerable extent justifiable—the advocates of municipal reform worked diligently for the five years which ran their course between the introduction of the question and the passage of the mutilated bill for Irish corporate reform. There was weighty truth in their doctrine; but when they looked for the redemption of Ireland by this means, they were wrong.

Others saw a necessity underlying even the deepest that have been pointed out; and they thought it might be met by giving every man in Ireland a right to subsistence. The uncertainty of food, and consequent recklessness of temper and habits among the labouring-classes; the carelessness or rapacity of bad landlords; the unprofitable management of the land; the depraving prevalence of mendicity, and almost all the worst evils of life in Ireland, might, it was said, be met, and in time corrected, by a good poor-law. This was the one great measure which would operate beneficially in all directons—would feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and settle the roving, and restrain the encroaching, and employ the idle—would bring the unscrupulous landowner to reflection and retribution, enable the good occupier to understand and control his own position—and would, in short, establish natural relations throughout the disorganised society of Ireland. There was weighty truth in all this—so much truth, and held by so many of the best minds among philosophers, statesmen, and men of business, that few dared to qualify the general expectation excited by their confidence; but there were persons who felt and said at the time that all who looked for the redemption of Ireland through an extension of the English poor-law were wrong.

Who, then, were right? Among these many who were wrong, was there no one right? It is surely not to be expected that any one should be wholly right. The proof of the insufficiency of any or all of the above-mentioned theories was not yet extant. The materials for a right judgment were scattered abroad—one person here and another there obtained a glimpse of true insight; and

some declared what they thought and saw. It was a common thing to be told that 'the land' was at the bottom of the Irish difficulty; but this might mean, and did mean, several different things. It might mean any one of a dozen prevalent vices and faults in the tenure, or distribution, or cultivation of land; or in the social circumstances which gave land a peculiar value in Ireland. Those who came nearest to the truth, consciously or unconsciously, were perhaps the lawyers, who told a friend, here and there, in an undertone by the fireside, that there was not a title to land in Ireland that would bear looking into; that this was a secret known to all who were concerned in it; that it accounted for the dispute about the value of the existing registry of deeds; the sorest impediment to improvement; the natural cause of the singular recklessness of Irish landlords; the sufficient explanation of the silence and apparent apathy of mortgagees and others concerned in the enriching of estates, about all methods of improvement and convenience; and a powerful instigation to men of various classes to take the law into their own hands, and to nourish those social feuds which might strengthen and protract the local dominion of men, whose title to their land was, or might be found, insecure.

The greater part of Irish landed property had been granted three times over at least, during the long sequence of troubles in that unhappy country. The descendants of old Irish chieftains still looked on those estates as properly their own which had been the homes of their fathers; and the posterity of all other dispossessed parties looked on with the same jealous eyes. As for those in actual possession, too many of them conducted themselves and their property in the way which has made the Irish landlord a by-word and reproach. The virtuous administration of their estates was not to such the great duty and object in life that it is usually seen to be in countries where the property is secure, as a matter of course; where the tenantry and labourers are regarded by the proprietor as persons to whom he owes serious duties; and where the improvement of the estate for the benefit of heirs is the first consideration in connection with it. Such is the

natural state of things—however set aside in special cases by the vices of bad landlords—under the main condition of security of property. The opposite state of affairs was that which naturally appeared in Ireland. The sole object too often was to make the most of the present time, leaving the future to take care of itself. The smallness of the proprietary body is in itself a serious and portentous evil in Ireland, where the number of holders of land in fee is said not to exceed 8000. The very large estates held by these few persons sink lower in productiveness, in proportion to the lapse of time which, instead of giving security, reveals embarrassments which are evidently insurmountable. Instead of investing capital in the land, for its improvement, the proprietors had split it into small freeholds, before the disfranchisement of 'the forties;' and the system was not changed after that disfranchisement, because more immediate profit was supposed obtainable from the high rents promised by the numerous tenantry than by improved cultivation. A proprietor, doubtful whether he could sell his land, on account of its questionable title, embarrassed by settlements and mortgages, hopeless of freeing the estate by any effort of his own, naturally does as his father did before him, and as he supposes his son will do after him—he gets what he can from year to year, and hopes the sky will not fall in his time. The insecurity extends to the tenantry, who are more numerous than the unimproved land can support. They got their land by bidding against each other; and they know that they cannot have it long—having promised rents which they cannot pay; so they snatch what they can from the ground and from fate, and make themselves as comfortable as they can till the sky falls. Such was the state of things, and the cause of that state, known to a few before the experiment of impartial government was tried in Ireland; and if only it had been more widely and thoroughly understood, it seems impossible that men should have expected so much as they did from reforms which did not touch the radical evil—the insecurity of landed property in Ireland. As we shall see, the remedies referred to above were all tried; and there is no need to inform any reader that Ireland is not yet redeemed.

1. First: various efforts were made to abate the religious rancour of Irish society. That little could be done through the reduction of the Church and the commutation of tithe, has been shown. We have seen how hard and protracted was the labour of getting anything done about tithe—owing to the very rancour which it was the great object to moderate. We have seen something, too, of the annihilation of Orangeism, as an organisation; but it would occupy a volume to tell all that happened between the Irish government and the Orangemen before the royal grand-master dissolved the association. The avowed principle of Lord Mulgrave's government was impartiality; and it appears to have been firmly adhered to: but so unused was Ireland to impartiality in the government, that both Protestants and Catholics interpreted the acts of the viceroy as favour to the Catholics. Investigation was made into the condition of Ribbonism, against which the Protestants declared themselves obliged to organise their Orangeism in self-defence; and, to the surprise of the government no less than others, it was found that scarcely anything but the name existed. Frequently as the world had been, and still was, alarmed by intimations in the newspapers of dreadful Ribbon plots, they were found, on the most searching inquiry, to be mere bugbears. As there was nothing to lay hold of, government could do no more than proscribe Ribbonism with all other secret societies, while it was compelled to inflict open shame upon Orangeism. The Orangemen began their demonstrations early after the arrival of Lord Mulgrave. In consequence of the recorder of Dublin having denounced the Melbourne administration as 'infidels in religion,' a public meeting was called in Dublin, to consider of this libel; and Orangemen attended in large bodies—a fight being, as usual, the close of the business. In consequence of a government prohibition of Orange processions in the north, a pamphlet was widely circulated which called on Orangemen to break the law, because government did not punish such breaches of the law as the swarming of Jesuits through the land, and the rearing of the unhallowed heads of monasteries. When the viceroy had returned from his southern journey, and was about to set

out for the north, the Orangemen of Londonderry threatened him through the newspapers with even personal violence. 'If he should come among us, he shall see such a display of Orange banners as shall put him into the horrors.' They would take care to give such notice of his approach as should secure him a reception which he had better not encounter; and so forth. While the viceroy was thus threatened by one party, and affectionately hailed by the other, it was difficult to keep the public mind fixed on the ruling government principle of impartiality. At the same time, intimation was officially given throughout the constabulary force that a sub-constable in Wexford had been dismissed on proof of his having attended an Orange lodge; and a drum-major was tried by court-martial, and reduced to the ranks, for having played party-tunes in the streets of Belfast. The viceroy disallowed the election of the master of an Orange lodge to the mayoralty of Cork, and of two other Orangemen as sheriffs, in September 1835. These instances looked like partiality while no Ribbonmen were dismissed or otherwise punished. If Ribbonmen could have been found, in office or out of it, they would have been punished; but all endeavours to detect and punish Ribbonism were in vain. A Catholic policeman endeavoured to join, in order to obtain information; and an inspector of police was sent to England to learn from an Irish soldier in a place of safety what he would not have told among his acquaintances at home: but all that could be discovered by all the powers of government and the police in five years, supplied ground for only one prosecution; and that broke down. Thus all the penalties devolved on one party; but it could not be said that that party only met with severity. As soon as the intention of the leaders to dissolve the Orange societies was known, the viceroy liberated all the Orangemen who were under arrest for joining prohibited party processions on the 12th July preceding.

The Irish Orangemen were, however, less obedient to their chiefs than the English and Scotch. The Dublin grand-committee met and decided that 'the mere will of the king was not law,' and that their watchword should

be 'No surrender.' Sir Harcourt Lees addressed a letter to the brethren, the last paragraph of which was adopted as the Tory text or watchword from that day forward: 'Orangemen, increase and multiply—be tranquil—be vigilant. Put your trust in God—still revere your king—and keep your powder dry.' This letter was dated February 27, 1836. On the 7th of April following, the Orange idol was rent to pieces in its shrine; the statue of William III. was blown up on its pedestal in College Green, Dublin. Here was a Catholic outrage—an act of Ribbon sedition at last. But almost before this was said, men began to smell some of the 'dry powder' above referred to in the train which blew up the statue. Government offered a large reward for the detection of the offender; and the Dublin corporation offered as much again. The perpetrator was never discovered; but some incidents of the time caused a general impression that the hand employed was that of a wrathful Orangeman.

Meantime, the viceroy and his coadjutors in the government persevered in bestowing office without regard to religious persuasion. They selected the fittest men; and if they inquired whether they were Protestant or Catholic, it was for the purpose of holding the balance as evenly as they could. The practice of setting aside Roman Catholics as jurors was broken through; and throughout the island, the Protestants, who had always regarded their neighbours of another faith as idolaters and rebels; saw with amazement and horror that they were trusted to try the accused, to administer the laws, and transact the business of society, as freely as if they hated the pope and cursed the Jesuits.

All this was very well; but a more effectual method of ultimately extinguishing religious rancour was supposed to be by the system of national education established in Ireland.

In October 1831, the first announcement of this scheme was made in a letter from the then Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Stanley, to the Duke of Leinster. The object was not new—the object of diminishing the violence of religious animosities by bringing together the children of Catholic and Protestant daily—to sit on the same bench, take an

interest in the same ideas, and find by constant experience and sympathy how much they had in common. This object had been aimed at through the organisation of the Kildare Street schools; but the machinery was not of the right kind, though conscientiously worked. In 1828, a committee of the House of Commons had recommended the adoption of a system 'which should afford, if possible, a combined literary, and separate religious education, and should be capable of being so far adapted to the views of the religious persuasions which prevail in Ireland, as to render it, in truth, a system of national education for the poorer classes of the community.' In order to meet the religious wants and wishes of all parties, certain days in each week are set apart for the religious instruction of the children by their respective clergy; and every encouragement was given to the communication of such instruction daily, before and after school-hours. The great difficulty was about the method of giving any religious sanction to the secular teaching in the schools. All desired some such sanction; but the Protestants contended for the whole Bible, spurning the idea of selections being made from it for school reading, as the rankest blasphemy, while the Catholics are not, as every one knows, allowed the free use of the Scriptures. Selections from the Bible were made, to the satisfaction of many clergy, both Protestant and Catholic; and these have been in use to this day. A brief remark dropped by the Archbishop of Dublin in the debate (February 28, 1837) on the appointment of a committee of inquiry into the Irish school-system, conveyed a significant hint and warning to those who heard him, and to many out of doors, that nothing could be more perilous than to circulate among the people exaggerated notions of the differences between the several versions of the records of their salvation. Yet, from the Bishop of Exeter in the Lords, down to the idlest clergyman without a flock in Ireland, the opposition to the Education Board and its acts, on the ground of the mutilation of the Scriptures, was virulent to a degree incredible in men who call themselves Christians. They could not, however, overthrow the board, or stop its good works. They could not even

hinder Protestants in Ireland from accepting the benefit of the schools, though hundreds and thousands of children were kept away, to be lost in ignorance and superstition, who would otherwise have been rational and enlightened citizens of a country whose main want is of good citizens. The Archbishop of Dublin said, on this 28th of February 1837, that 'he had ascertained, by examination, that in these schools [in a particular district] extending to between 300 and 400, in which it was said there were no Protestants, that about 22,000 Roman Catholic children and 16,000 Protestants had been educated.' In the face of every kind of opposition, even of atrocious slanders without any foundation whatever, slanders such as bigotry, and religion, and party-spirit in politics could alone generate, the national school-system in Ireland continued to expand and flourish during the whole period of the Melbourne administration, tending to humanise every district where it was planted, and preparing, as it was fondly hoped, a brightening prospect of social peace for a future generation. During the eight years from the establishment of the system to the going out of the Whig administration in 1841, we find an annual advance in the number of schools and scholars, in an accelerating ratio, till, since 1834, the number of schools in operation had increased from 789 to 2337, and the number of scholars from 107,042 to 281,849. And the board was then about to aid 382 additional schools, which would add 48,000 to the number of pupils on the rolls. When hundreds of thousands of children were thus reared in security from sectarian rancour, it seemed to many that such rancour might, and must in time, be discharged from the mind of the Irish people; but good as was the work, and bright as were the hopes which it yielded, it is not the less clear that those were wrong who looked to this institution for the redemption of Ireland.

2. Next, we must glance at the policy desired by those who would have won over O'Connell from his practice of teaching dislike and distrust of the law, believing this dislike and distrust of the law to be the one impediment to the redemption of the Irish people. At the same time that O'Connell was won over to silence, the Irish government was to rule conspicuously by the ordinary powers of the

law, to exercise the strictest impartiality, and to compel a similar recognition of equality before the law throughout the country, by a reform of the justiciary.

The characterising virtue of Lord Mulgrave's administration in Ireland was its reliance on the ordinary powers of the law, and the impartial exercise of them. Extreme as was the consternation of the Church and Tory portion of Irish society at seeing Catholic gentlemen admitted to the magistracy, and Catholic lawyers to office in Dublin. and Catholic juries sitting to try offenders, either Protestant or Catholic, and loud as was the outcry about the return of the times of James. II., and the domination of the pope in Ireland, the improvement in social life, and the decrease of crime, soon became unquestionable facts. It was an affecting sight to those who happened to be in Ireland in 1837, to see the awakening of the Catholic population to a sense of what law and justice were, and to a hope that they might share in the benefit. The Catholic priesthood led the way in trusting the government; and the people followed. It was a touching sight—that of the melting down of the popular spirit of pride and cunning into gratitude and trust. Hitherto, the pride of the Irish peasant had nourished itself in defiance first, and then evasion of the law, as in defiance and circumvention of an enemy. The chief ground of the popular admiration of O'Connell was his success in defying and evading the law; and every follower of the agitator gloried in emulating him, as far as opportunity allowed. Now, for the first time, the idea dawned upon the general Irish mind, that law and justice might possibly be a benefit, and not an oppression; and when fostered by the priests, and justified by the whole course of the government, this idea grew clear and strong, the revulsion of feeling was a truly affecting sight. Criminals became odious, instead of endeared, by their crimes; they were informed against, instead of harboured; and the fiercest wrong-doers felt ashamed of outrages against the public peace, instead of glorying in them. If the cause of Irish misery had not lain deeper than was then dreamed of—if all collateral improvements had not been swept away through the absence of the only effectual remedy—the training of the

Catholic Irish to legality and order in Lord Mulgrave's time might have proved their permanent redemption from one of their worst national faults. As it was, the remarkable and steady subsidence of crime, during the whole term of the Whig administration in Ireland, is a sufficient testimony to the wisdom and humanity of the characterising principle of its rule.

Sir R. Peel reminded parliament, in 1829, that 'for scarcely one year during the period that has elapsed since the union, has Ireland been governed by the ordinary course of law.' Insurrection Acts, Suspension of the Habeas Corpus, and martial law, were all familiarly associated in men's minds with the very name of Ireland; and all had been in vain—so vain, that parliament itself became uneasy and remorseful; and Lord Grey's government fell on the question of a Coercion Bill. Now, for a term of years, the experiment was tried of putting the ordinary law in force without fear or favour; and the result was, that at the close of the viceroy's term of government, twenty-seven out of thirty-two counties in Ireland were perfectly tranquil, or eminently tranquillised, while the remaining five were not worse than they had always been before; that, while the decrease of crimes proceeded from year to year, the proportion of convictions to committals, and of committals to offences, was always on the increase—showing that at length the people were taking their part in the administration of justice, for the public good; that wherever the influence and example of the government could act freely, crime had almost disappeared—as in the instance of the celebrated faction-fights, which were now seldom heard of; while the crimes which did continue were those which arose from agrarian discontents—from that great underlying grievance which every government has left untouched; and, finally that the decrease of crime, on comparison of the three years ending in 1838 with the three years ending in 1828, was no less than 10 per cent. of murder and manslaughter, 46 per cent. of shooting and stabbing, 29 per cent. of conspiracy to murder, 56 per cent. of burglary, and 86 per cent. of housebreaking for arms in the night.

The alarmed Protestants in parliament, however, com-

plained that Lord Mulgrave desecrated and annulled the law by his clemency. He had made a circuit through the south first, and then through the north of Ireland, and had visited the jails, and most establishments supported by the public funds. In visiting the jails, he had inquired of three parties concerning the prisoners whose pardon might be desirable—of the resident officers about their conduct in prison; of the medical officers about their health; and of neighbouring gentlemen about their previous character, and the probability of their good conduct henceforth. Where necessary, application was made to the judges for guidance. Of 800 petitions for pardon, about half had been entertained; of these, only 100 had been favourably answered, on certificates from medical men and others. These—whatever had been said to the contrary—were Protestants or Catholics, as might happen; while the rest, the only class to whom the prison-doors had been thrown open freely, were Orangemen convicted of joining illegal processions. The small proportion of recommitments among the offenders thus pardoned testified to the discretion of the mercy which had released them at the commencement of a new period in the government of Ireland; yet the political Protestants, perplexed and dismayed by the new doctrine and practice of equity before the law, persisted in calling the viceroy's journeys of inspection 'jail-delivery circuits,' and concluded that pardon was granted for the sake of the Catholics.

There was another doctrine, propounded by a member of the government at this time, which was offensive to the political 'Protestants,' as they called themselves, who opposed the acts of the Mulgrave administration. There is no survivor of that administration who will not eagerly assent to the avowal, that that one member, Mr. Drummond, was the mind and soul of it. Mr. Drummond, the military surveyor, the discoverer of the light known by his name, the private secretary of Lord Althorp, by the united wish of Lord Grey's cabinet, and the Irish under-secretary under Lords Mulgrave and Morpeth, was a man of great external calmness, of eminent prudence in the ordinary affairs of life, and, till of late years, apparently devoted altogether to scientific pursuits. His acquaintances

were wont to rally him for his Scotch prudence and caution, and to describe the pleasures and pains of enthusiasm to him, as things that he could not possibly know anything about. It was his function in Ireland which revealed him to his friends, if not to himself. His subdued enthusiasm now manifested itself in a moral force, as lofty and sustained as it was powerful. The cool man of science came out the philanthropist, the philosopher, the statesman, the virtual preacher—carrying the loftiest spirit of devotedness into each function. He put wisdom into the counsels of the Irish government, and moderation into its demeanour. He put enthusiasm into the justice which he gave impartially to the Irish people; and he called for justice in the enthusiasms which the observant people paid back to the government. It was he who repressed crime throughout the nation, and rebuked its passions, and stilled its turbulence, and encouraged its hopes, and stimulated its industry, and soothed its sorrows. His sobriety of judgment and calmness of manner never gave way; but a fervour, like that of renewed youth, latterly pervaded his whole mind, animated all his faculties, and deepened his habitual composure, while he was consciously meeting the martyr's doom. He lived too fast, knowingly and willingly, during these few years which he believed to be so critical for Ireland. Under his work, his responsibilities, his thronging ideas, his working emotions, his frame could not hold out long; and he was prostrated at once by an attack of illness in the spring of 1840. 'I am dying for Ireland,' he said, just at the last. He died for Ireland; and in the contemplation of his death, how do other deaths which bear more of the external marks of martyrdom for Ireland shrink, by comparison, in our estimate! Here was no passion—no insulting speech—no underhand or defiant action—no collision of duties—no forfeiture of good faith—no implication of the helpless in danger—no disturbance of society—no imperiling of any life but his own. No man who courted the bullet or the gibbet ever dared more. No man who organised rebellion in consultations by day and drillings at night ever wrought harder. No man who cast his all into the revolutionary balance was ever more disinterested and devoted. He, a soldier of a sensitive

spirit, brought upon himself unmeasured insult, which would elsewhere have been intolerable; but for Ireland's sake he bore it all. He went through endless toils which nobody knew of, who could give him any return of honour. He felt himself sinking, before he had attained the rewards which might once have been alluring to him—before he had attained wealth, or rank, or a post in the world's eye, or the fame of statesmanship; but he toiled on, too busy on Ireland's behalf to have a regret to spare for such things as these. If there are any who cannot reconcile themselves to such an issue, let them remember how noble a way remains to do him honour. Let them name his name when Ireland wants his example. When boasts of martyrdom abound, and blustering patriots would rouse the ignorant and suffering to rash enterprises, and men who will not work for Ireland talk of fighting for her, and those who cannot deny their own vanity, or indolence, or worldly care, claim the glory of patriotic agitation, let the name of Thomas Drummond be quietly spoken, and human nature has lost its rectitude and its sensibility if the arrogance be not shamed, and the vaunt silenced.

He was a man whom few things could astonish. One of the few things which did astonish him was the effect of certain words of his own which appeared to him as simple and commonplace as anything he ever uttered. It is certainly true, however, that the most commonplace sayings have an effect proportioned to the moral force of those who utter them; and in this case the words appear —even now to us—instinct with the just and brave spirit of the man. The story was this. In the course of the debate in the Upper House on Lord Roden's motion, towards the close of 1837, it was mentioned by Lord Mulgrave (then become Marquis of Normanby), and by other speakers on the same side, that all inquiry led to the conclusion that the murders and manslaughter in Ireland were not owing to religious differences or political discontents, but almost exclusively to agrarian grievances. This opinion, far from acceptable to listening Orangemen and Irish landlords, was vehemently protested against, not only by Lord Roden, but by the Duke of Wellington, who quoted the Marquis Wellesley as an indisputable

authority, who had said that the agrarian disturbances themselves were ascribable to political agitation. From that time, the Irish landlords and political chiefs on the Tory side seem to have taken for granted that the government was a company of declared foes, who would keep watch on the management of their private affairs, and cast upon them the responsibility of all outrages perpetrated on Irish estates. On the 1st of January 1839, Lord Norbury was shot in his own shrubbery, in broad daylight, while pointing out to his steward some trees which he destined for removal. The cause of the deed was shrouded in mystery. Lord Norbury was on good terms with his Catholic neighbours and tenants; and he did not concern himself about politics. The question was naturally asked by everybody whether this was another agrarian outrage. The very words fired the passions of the landlords—before jealous, and now panic-stricken. At a meeting which they held, in the name of the magistrates of King's County at Tullamore, to consider the circumstances of this murder and of the country, they reverted to those few words of Mr. Drummond's which their vehement wrath at once raised into a proverb. These words were found in a letter of Mr. Drummond's, in reply to a request from the magistrates of Tipperary for an increase of military or police force. The under-secretary refused the assistance requested, and gave reasons which induced the receivers of the letter to keep it secret, lest the common people should hear about it, 'and be led to think ill of the landlords.' The letter was asked for in parliament, however, and necessarily produced; and it actually became a parliamentary document before the magistrates of Tipperary had been generally permitted to see it. In this much canvassed letter occurred the words: Property has its duties as well as its rights.' In their fear and grief at the murder of Lord Norbury, possibly through some discontent among his tenantry, though he was a kind landlord, the King's County magistrates reverted to Mr. Drummond's proposition, as a subject on which to vent their passion; and it shows how wild and desperate must have been their wrath that they could fall out with a proposition so simply indisputable. It was declared that in

that letter, the Tipperary magistrates were 'bearded and insulted' by Mr. Drummond. A resolution was carried without a division, 'that it appears to this meeting that the answer conveyed to the magistrates of Tipperary from Mr. Under-secretary Drummond has had the unfortunate effect of increasing the animosities entertained against the owners of the soil by the occupants, who now constitute themselves the sole arbiters of the rights as well as the duties of property.' Lord Charleville ventured to declare, in moving this resolution, that the saying about property having duties as well as rights, though innocent enough in itself, was felt to be little less than a deliberate and unfeeling insult in the circumstances under which it was offered. When the plainest truths of morals are felt to be personal insults, all men see how the matter stands; and all men know that those plain truths are then made vital. And so it was in this case. The Tory landlords of Ireland have never forgotten that property has its duties as well as its rights. But the annunciation of this truth was fatal to all perception on their part of the impartiality of government rule.

One instance of the impartiality—of the want of respect of persons—exasperated the 'ascendency' leaders extremely. It was not only poor men—sub-constables and the like—who were dismissed from the government service for Orangeism, but great men also, with equal speed and certainty. Colonel Verner, who represented the Orangemen of the empire in the Commons, during the investigation of the Fairman plot, gave at an election dinner, as a party toast, 'the battle of the Diamond.' Mr. Drummond wrote to inquire whether it could be possible that Colonel Verner was thus a party to the commemoration of a lawless and disgraceful conflict. Colonel Verner's reply first supposed that he could not be expected to condescend to reply, and requested that any future question which the secretary might be desired to ask, should 'be expressed in terms better qualified to invite an answer;' and then refused to answer the inquiry at all. The chief-secretary, Lord Morpeth, now wrote himself, and assigning reasons at length for the step taken by the government signified to Colonel Verner his removal from the commis-

sion of the peace, and from the office of deputy-lieutenant of the county of Tyrone. Colonel Verner brought the matter before parliament, and thereby did an unintentional service to the government by publishing, in the most effectual manner, the evidence of its principles and methods of rule. Among the ignorant and passionate poor, meantime, the repressive and equalising rule of the government was extending, without its being felt as pressure. The police force of Dublin, and the constabulary throughout the country, were renovated and organised till they became as fine a body of police as exists in any country. Where the justices could not be relied on for repressing political demonstrations, stipendiary magistrates were planted, to direct the constabulary; and the quiet which followed surprised even the authors of it. Many causes of breach of the law were removed by the Tithe Act, and by new provisions and arrangements in relation to the collection of rents and the serving of the processes of the inferior local courts. Collisions between the people and rent-collectors and process-servers were thus almost entirely obviated. But provision was at the same time made for the more certain and effectual punishment of all who still offended. Government undertook the prosecution of several classes of offences which before must be pursued by private parties, who might be accessible to fear or favour. Crown prosecutors appeared at the quarter-sessions—one for each county—and obtained convictions for a great number of offences which would otherwise, though well known, have gone unpunished—to the disgrace of justice, and the demoralisation of the people. Witnesses were protected by government, before and after the trials, and publicly recognised as citizens who were doing their duty to society. By a steady use of these methods, more was done to enlighten the Irish as to the true function of law, and to convince them of its being a blessing to every man of them all, than could have been supposed possible in so short a term of years. But the underlying mischief was not removed nor touched; and those who looked to the admirable administration of law and justice by Lord Normanby's government for the redemption of Ireland were wrong.

3. The idea that an affectionate despotism—a government by apostles—is the only government that will suit the Irish people, unfit as they are thought to have shown themselves for a share in a representative system, seems almost too romantic and unpractical for an express mention in our age. But it happens, curiously enough, that we have evidence before our eyes that, suitable as a government by apostles may be to the Irish mind and temper, it could not avail for the redemption of the country. There has been no want of apostles or of idols in our own time; and little permanent good has accrued from the action of the very best. Lord Normanby and his coadjutors were truly apostles, on a mission of justice and mercy; yet after how short a course of years were they compelled to avow that their 'policy of conciliation was exhausted!' In the latter years of their term, too, they had the advantage of speaking in the name of the queen, who was perfectly idolised throughout the length and breadth of the land. We are assured by those who have explored the repository of Irish songs, and collected the political ballads which abound among the peasantry, that in O'Connell's most triumphant days, his simplest admirers did not dream of his title of king interfering with that of the queen. Her majesty, we are told, had a perfect host of volunteer poet-laureates; and the publishers of the popular literature declared that the most favourite old national ballads would not sell unless some lines in praise of Victoria were added. In the religious ballads, her majesty is even more prominent still. The prophecies of this beloved order of poetry, whose tone is prophetic throughout, all point to the restoration of the true Church, and of Irish prosperity in consequence. Always favourites of the Catholic peasantry, from Queen Elizabeth's days to Queen Victoria's, they circulate most diligently in times of discontent and approaching revolt; and they now, for the first time since the Revolution, expressed trust in a lawful ruler. In Elizabeth's days, the retriever was to be the King of Spain; then the O'Neill; then the Stuarts, regnant and exiled; then Dan. O'Connell; and, at the time under our notice, Queen Victoria. She is to build up the old Munster Cathedral, and the Catholic Church generally; and to

remedy every evil, great and small, that afflicts humanity in her Irish dominions. And there is, in the eyes of the singers of these ballads, no unreasonableness in expecting such things from 'our noble young queen:' on the contrary, it would be impious to expect less—Victoria being especially watched over by the Virgin, and aided by St. Francis; and having as supporters Lord Mulgrave on the one hand, and Dan. O'Connell on the other. While the Orangemen of the north were striving to outdo everybody in protestations of devotion to the queen, and she was thus adored by the Catholic peasantry of the south, her representative and ministers had no permanent success in their efforts to 'tranquillise Ireland.' Nor, as it appears, would they have succeeded better if the great apostle of all had been at the antipodes. In governing by an affectionate despotism, it would always be a difficulty to make sure of having but one despot at a time. O'Connell, however, though he might at any moment interfere with the course of the Mulgrave or any other administration, was not, in fact, at this period interfering with it. For a short time, he left off calling the government 'the base, bloody, and brutal Whigs,' and mentioned repeal only now and then, to keep up the government to its business, as he thought. He heard with delighted ears, and repeated with an untiring tongue, the declaration of Lord John Russell, in February, 1837, of the principles which the Whigs consulted in their theory of Irish government; a declaration which he interpreted as a manifesto in favour of ruling Ireland by an affectionate despotism. 'I will take leave,' said Lord John Russell, in introducing the Irish Municipal Reform Bill, 'to quote the principle of our conduct from the recorded words of a very great man. . . . . Mr. Fox stated, in a very eloquent speech which he delivered in 1797, the principles upon which he conceived the government of Ireland should be conducted. He stated in his usual frank—it might be said incautious manner, that he conceived that concessions should be made to the people of Ireland; he said, if he found he had not conceded enough, he would concede more; he said that he thought the only way of governing Ireland was to please the people of Ireland—that he knew no better source of strength to this country;

and he declared in one sentence which I will read to the House, his wish with respect to the government of Ireland. "My wish is," said Mr. Fox, "that the whole people of Ireland should have the same principles, the same system, the same operation of government: and though it may be a subordinate consideration, that all classes should have an equal chance of emolument in other words, I would have the whole Irish government regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices; and I firmly believe, according to another Irish expression, the more she is under Irish government, the more will she be bound to English interests."' This would have been all very well, if the only danger of antagonism had been between Ireland and England; but the theory was vitiated, fatally, by the antagonism of parties within Ireland herself. However, its enunciation gave sufficient satisfaction to O'Connell to secure his temporary co-operation. He praised the Whigs, dined with the viceroy, railed at the opposition in the House of Commons with a coarseness of language and demeanour which confounded the speaker himself; called upon every peasant in every village to regard himself as a supporter of the government; but withal kept up his General Association—the successor of the Catholic Association—and gave it the name of the Precursor Society, as a broad hint of the repeal agitation that would follow, if the government fell below his mark.

It was in 1836, when the Lords were throwing out their Municipal Reform Bill, that the organisation was restored, for the 'rousing of the millions of Ireland,' as Mr. Sheil said, 'and a development of the might which slumbers in her arm.' 'The association, the old association, with its millions for its sustainment, is what we want, and what we needs must have again.' And they had it, at its old place of meeting, the Corn Exchange, with its old chair, presented to it by O'Connell; its tribute, under the new name of the justice-rent; its machinery of appeals and of regulation, and of registration, and its old assumption of dictatorial power. It was an affectionate despotism, corroborative for a time of British government, but ready for opposition at any moment. Its change of title from the General to the Precursor Association, was

ominous; and it sounded somewhat like a bull when O'Connell, in 1839, at the time of the fiercest parliamentary opposition to the Normanby administration, called upon his 'two millions of Precursors' to rally in defence of the Saxon government of the day. How far the mission of the great apostle of all tended to the tranquillisation of Ireland, it would be a mere mockery to pretend to point out.

As if to meet the objection that the failure of such a mission is ascribable to the vices of the apostle, another affectionate despotism, exercised by a blameless apostle, was now extending in Ireland. In 1829, Ireland spent £6,000,000 on proof-spirits; and there was not a town where men 'beastly drunk' with whisky were not staggering about the streets, ready for a fight on any pretence or none; and not a hamlet in the country where the hovel of the sot might not be seen, bare of comfort and teeming with disease. In the summer of that year, an American gentleman visited a friend at Belfast; and some must have afterwards thought of that blessing on the hospitable, that they 'may entertain angels unawares.' Dr. Penny from America found his host, Dr. Edgar, of Belfast, meditating the means of securing the better observance of the Sabbath, and a purer social conduct altogether, in the city of his abode. Just before this, all good men in the cities of the United States had taken alarm at the spread of intemperance in their prosperous country, and were glad to embrace any method which might promise even a temporary check. The wisest of them were far from supposing that moral restraint can be effectually and permanently secured by any mechanical organisation; and there were many who seriously dreaded the consequences of imposing an artificial check which, if it gave way, would plunge the victim into the worse sin of perjury, and utterly degrade him in his own eyes. If the dispossessed devil should return, he would inevitably bring with him others worse than himself. And the testimony of physicians soon proved but too plainly that there were frequent violations of the pledge, and hopeless relapses into intemperance, now made doubly foul by having become secret and wrapped up in lies. Still, it was so

absolutely necessary that something should be done, that the wisest, with trembling tread, followed where the rash rushed in upon the sacred precincts of conscience, and lent a hand to work the machinery by which its free action was to be superseded. They thought they must take their chance with the adults for the sake of the young. They must run the risk of betraying the mature sinner into deeper guilt, to save the rising generation from overpowering temptation. They must shut up the spirit-shops and distilleries, and clear the streets of drunken men, and cleanse the private houses of the smell of rum; they must put the sin and its means and incentives out of sight—out of the reach of every sense—that it might occur as little as possible to any mind, and that children might not be infected into the destruction which had overtaken their fathers. Those who were most clearly sensible of the unsoundness of the principle of societies for individual moral restraint, yet dared not refuse to join this movement in a crisis which, to use the words of an American clergyman, 'threatened to overthrow society, and humanity itself, in the United States.' The work was in progress in that summer when Dr. Penny visited Dr. Edgar at Belfast. From what he heard, Dr. Edgar resolved that his efforts should be made in this direction; and he published his first appeal on behalf of temperance societies, in August 1829. In the course of a year, four travelling agents dispersed his tracts all over the island. By keeping the subject constantly before the public eye, he caused knowledge, as well as interest, to spring up in every direction; and it was not long before thoughtful men in all parts of Ireland had become aware that four-fifths of the crime brought up for justice, three-fourths of the hopeless beggary at that period, and an immeasurable amount of disease and mental suffering, proceeded from the practice of spirit-drinking. The Surgeon-general for Ireland testified that, in Dublin, nearly one-fourth of the deaths of adults were caused by spirit-drinking; a county magistrate of Antrim furnished a list of forty-eight persons who had perished from the same cause, within two miles of his house, and within his own recollection; and there was abundant proof that in extensive neighbourhoods not one

dwelling was pure from the vice. Here was scope for the operations of an affectionate despotism. A fitting apostle came, and the experiment was tried.

From that summer of 1829, temperance societies had been formed here and there—the first being in New Ross, proposed and opened by the Rev. George Carr, a clergyman of the Established Church. In course of time some inhabitants of Cork—a clergyman, a Quaker, a slater, and a tailor—anxious to accomplish a similar object in their city, commended the enterprise to a man, popular above every one in the place, and liberal enough to be on good terms with men of all opinions—a Capuchin friar, and superior of the order, by name Theobald Mathew. It was some years after the first movement that he gave his mind and heart to the work, and thereby became the great moral, as O'Connell was the political, apostle of Ireland.

It must be allowed that something beyond the morality of the case might probably be in the minds of the followers of Father Mathew. Of the two millions whom he had in a few months pledged to temperance, there were, no doubt, many who supposed that some great crisis was at hand which required this act of self-denial from all true Irishmen; that they might be up and awake, have their wits about them, and be ready for action—whether Victoria should come to restore the Catholic Church, or the liberator to be king of Ireland, or repeal should make every man's plot of ground fruitful in potatoes. It was a prevalent belief among the peasantry that Father Mathew could work miracles; and some even declared that he had raised a person from the dead. The terrific zeal with which the people rushed into a condition of temperance, shows an extraordinary strength of expectation, whatever the object of it might be; and there is no question of the fact, that the political leaders in Ireland considered it of importance to organise and train the water-drinkers of Ireland into a force, with its marching companies, its brass bands, and its community of sentiment. These things show, not only the blessing that it was to the Irish to have for an apostle a man so disinterested as Father Mathew, but also how insecure and dangerous is government by affectionate despotism, which may always be liable to be appro-

priated by the most artful and unscrupulous agitator for his own purposes. After a year or two from the crowding of the country people into Limerick to take the pledge, in such multitudes as to break down iron railings, and cause deaths from trampling and pressure—within a year or two of the time when Father Mathew found it necessary to travel among his hundreds of thousands of disciples, because their thronging to him was dangerous to life and limb, it was noticed that the Irish character appeared to have sensibly changed. If, as has been said, the rebellion of 1798 was put down by force of whisky, and not of arms, it had now evidently become of first-rate importance that the hosts of sober, grave-faced men, who came marching to the temperance field, without fun and frolic, and with no noise but that of their practised bands of music, should not be driven or led into rebellion; for it was clear that whisky would not now put them down. It must be hoped that the evil disposed would find it less easy now than formerly to lead or drivé them into rebellion, for assuredly rebellion would henceforth be a more formidable thing than it had hitherto been. Here were two millions of men, of a passionate nature—suddenly debarred from an accustomed outlet of passion and animal spirits, and by the same change, left with a large amount of time on their hands, and with heads cool for thought and device. If they had had more knowledge and a sufficiency of good leaders, this would have been the opportunity—the finest ever offered in the history of their country—for attaching them to the English connection, by showing to them the benefits of that connection under the Normanby government, and the far greater blessings which must accrue upon their being merely deserved. Now was the golden opportunity for beginning a sound political education if only the great political apostle had been worthy of the honour of his post. This could not have redeemed Ireland, directly or immediately, for the great underlying mischief was still untouched; but it might have somewhat softened the horrors of the impending doom of Ireland; and it would at least have mitigated the pain on every hand if that doom had overtaken a nation of thoughtful rational men, striving with courageous prudence and energy against

their fate, amidst the respect of a sympathising world, instead of a mass of helpless and heart-wrung sufferers, betrayed by selfish or senseless agitators, and beguiled to the last by visions conceived in nonsense and vanishing in woe. Father Mathew did his work—did it in purity of heart and devotedness of soul. O'Connell perverted it, as we shall hereafter see. He seized upon the new gravity and critical leisure which Father Mathew had evoked—he seized upon the minds all alive with wonder, and the hearts all glowing with gratitude at the blessed change wrought by a general temperance in health and home, and turned them full into the channel of his repeal agitation. He called, and probably believed, his rule over the Catholic Irish an affectionate despotism; but we can hardly conceive of his influence being more fatal to his trusting countrymen, if he had laid waste their fields with actual firebrands instead of with those of the tongue, and driven them from their homes with curses, instead of unsettling their lives with cruel promises of fabulous good. Ireland has been abundantly cursed with barbarous despots; but it may be doubted whether any one of them, in the long course of centuries, has perpetrated such effectual cruelty as the despot whom his victims called their liberator, and hoped to see their king.

Father Mathew did his work, on the whole, well—unquestionably with as much singleness of aim as devotion of soul. Wherever he had been, blessings sprang up, as if he had indeed been the heaven-sent friend that he was taken to be. The water-springs gave out health and refreshment, and the daily food had a new relish. The dull eye grew bright: the mad pulse subsided; the staggering gait became a manly tread. The cabin roof kept out the rain; the decent table, with decent seats round it, appeared again in the middle of the lately empty room. There was a bed now, inviting to a sleep which had become light and sweet. The chest gradually filled with clothes, and the stocking in the thatch grew heavy with money. The wrangling voice, roaring curses or tipsy songs, grew gentle and cheerful. The very echoes—at least the celebrated ones—of Killarney, and the mountain-passes sought by strangers, had changed their

tone and theme, and now promised coffee instead of whisky to the guides on their return. The distilleries were shut up by dozens; and the little suspicious clouds of blue smoke which used to curl away over the heathery knolls in the wilds, seemed to have whiffed away altogether. The grog-shops were changed into coffee-kitchens, and men laid their wits together in speculations about the tactics of O'Connell and the fate of Ireland, instead of breaking one another's heads in drunken frays. There was a large increase, in the very first year, in the number of depositors in savings-banks; at the end of two years, when the number of the pledged exceeded two millions and a half, no one of the whole host had appeared before judge or jury. Ireland had before paid away six millions in one year for proof-spirit: now, in two years, the consumption, for all purposes whatever, had lessened to little more than one half. The drawback on the satisfaction of all this was, that the principle on which the reform proceeded was not altogether sound, and the reform itself could not therefore be permanent in all its entireness. When the superstitious disciple kneeled down before the heaven-sent friar, spoke the oath, received the sign of the cross and the uniform blessing, and then had the medal and card put into his hand, it was in a firm belief that some tremendous plague would come upon him if he broke his pledge; that Father Mathew knew men's thoughts, and had a divine power to heal and to save; and that some divine virtue resided in the medal and card. Father Mathew did not originate the superstitions; but he thought it hopeless to contend with them. 'If I could prevent them,' he said in a letter, 'without impeding the glorious cause, they should not have been permitted; but both are so closely entwined, that the tares cannot be pulled out without plucking up the wheat also. The evil will correct itself: and the good, with the divine assistance, will remain and be permanent.' It needs no showing that the temperance movement of Father Mathew is thus reduced from a secure moral reform to a temporary enthusiasm, in as far as the superstitious are included within its scope. It is a rational hope that much seed may have fallen into good ground; but the sower has grievously erred in consigning some to soil where

it cannot take root, but must wither away. It is, however, a most impressive fact that, by one of the affectionate despotisms coexisting with Lord Mulgrave's eminently constitutional rule, two millions and a half of gay or brutal drunkards were turned into a corps of the most thoughtful and emotional men in Ireland.

4. There were persons and parties who believed that Ireland would be best redeemed by a cure of her notorious political corruption; and that that cure might be best wrought by such a machinery of supervision as would, in fact, restrict the franchise within what were called safe limits. When men related to each other how landlords in Ireland had cut up their estates to make small freeholds; what droves of ignorant serfs were carried to the polling-booths to vote in a mass as their landlord bade them; how these freeholders suddenly passed over from the dominion of their landlords to that of their priests, and how this led to the disfranchisement of the forties—they were apt to agree that a state of things so bad as to have caused that disfranchisement must be most radically cured by an extension of the same process, or of an equivalent safeguard. From such views and consultations issued Lord Stanley's Registration Bill for Ireland of 1840.

There was no dispute about the enormity of the abuses of the franchise in Ireland. Lord Melbourne's government waited only for a further settlement of the registration machinery of England and Scotland to take in hand the reform of such corruption in Ireland as was practised by means of registration certificates. It was not difficult for a man to get registered three or four times over, obtaining a certificate each time; and, of course, it was easy enough to make these certificates passports for fictitious votes. In order to guard against this and other abuses, Lord Stanley's measure proposed a method and machinery of registration so onerous and irksome as would, in the opinion of government and of a majority in parliament, act as a virtual disfranchisement. If every vote might be annually revised, and an appeal on the part of the voter must be made to the judge once a year, it could not be believed that voters circumstanced as multitudes of the Irish tenantry were, would or could undergo such a discipline

for the sake of the privilege of the franchise. Lord J. Russell thought this bill the most formidable attack yet made on the principles of the Reform Act. The aim of the reform legislation was to extend and facilitate the exercise of the franchise, while this proposed method of registration threw every possible difficulty and discouragement in the way. As the case was, however, one which could not be neglected, and a bad measure would be carried if a good one were not proposed, the ministers bestirred themselves to prepare an Irish Registration Bill which should drive out Lord Stanley's. The ministers did not disguise their apprehensions of the effect of the opposition measure, if carried, nor that they conceived its operation, if not its intent, to be to counteract the emancipation measure of 1829, by rendering it difficult or impossible for the poorer —that is, the Catholic portion of Ireland—to send their fair share of representatives to parliament. Lord John Russell pointed to the much-dreaded power of O'Connell in Ireland as little formidable while the Irish should have faith in the justice and good-will of the British parliament. 'That,' said he, 'I believe to be the state of things now. But let this bill pass; show that you are determined, step by step, to take away the franchise from the people of Ireland, to disable them from sending Roman Catholics as members of this House; obtain that supremacy, if you can, which you have not had for many years; indulge in the triumph which the minority would then indulge in over the majority; insult, vilify, and abuse the Roman Catholics; tell them that the people are ignorant, degraded, and priest-ridden, and speak of those priests in a tone of contumely and contempt: do all this, and you will have done more for repeal than anything the honourable and learned gentleman has been able to effect by his speeches upon this subject.' Such language as this from a member of the cabinet indicates what was felt of the extremity of the risk. Lord Stanley and his friends naturally protested against the charge of insidiously contriving to narrow the franchise, and to keep the Catholic representatives out of parliament. Sir R. Peel was among those who thus protested. It is most probable that they meant, as men in parliament always do mean, only what they considered

good—to cut off abuses, and leave the franchise sound; and if that operation should issue in giving less power than before to the ignorant Catholic population, they could not pretend to think that consequence any great evil. But they, by their very vindication of their intentions, exposed themselves to the charge of not understanding the conditions of the suffrage in the country-districts of Ireland, where, whether they knew it or not, this bill would act as a sweeping disfranchisement. If they knew this, they could not quarrel with the charges of their opponents; if they did not know it, they ought to have known it.

The danger was from this state of things being little understood by the greater number of members in the House. If the ministers were alarmed at the outset of Lord Stanley's enterprise, they might well be in a panic as the summer drew on. The second reading of the bill was carried by a majority of 16 on the 26th of March. On the question of going into committee on the 20th of May, there was a majority of three against ministers. They were beaten in every attempt to throw out their opponents on any point whatever. O'Connell grew savage; and the more violent supporters of the bill exasperated his passion by insults which no man of flesh and blood could be expected to endure. When, on this first night in committee, he said that this was a bill for trampling on the liberties of the people of Ireland, several members shouted in his face—whistled in his face—laughed full in his face. At each insult he repeated the words—the inattention of the chairman allowing the scene to go on—and after the third repetition of the assertion, in his most emphatic manner, Mr. O'Connell brought matters to a crisis by exclaiming: 'If you were ten times as beastly in your uproar and bellowing, I should still feel it to be my duty to interpose to prevent this injustice.' On being called to account, some of his humour peeped out in his appeal to natural history. 'Bellowing' was certainly the right word, he said; and what creatures but beasts were able to bellow? The uproar showed the extremity of the hope and fear of parties in one way; and then, the obstructions and struggles in committee showed the same

thing in another way. No means and devices were spared to delay the progress of the bill; and on the 6th of July, Lord Stanley gave in, for this session. His tone was, reasonably enough, one of triumph, while acknowledging the certainty of defeat by delay, if he did not withdraw his measure. He repudiated the censure most prominently put forward about his bill—that it did not raise any question about the franchise—avowing that the reform of the registration was the aim of the measure. He pointed with pride to the 300 members who had sustained an opposition bill against the whole power of the government through ten divisions, in nine of which the ministers were beaten; and he promised a renewal of the struggle early in the next session.

In the interval, an association was formed in Ulster, for the object of procuring a reform of the registration: and Lord Stanley made some few and not very important changes in his bill, on their information. He introduced his measure on the 2nd of February; and the government brought in their rival bill two days afterwards. There is something painful in the retrospect of this whole transaction. It was now several years since the Reform Bill had passed, and nothing had been done for electoral improvement in Ireland. The Whig government offered reasons and excuses in plenty; but nothing that they could say obviated the general impression that that must be a government too weak to rule which cannot get its proper business done till it is roused into a spirit of rivalship with the opposition. Lord Howick had voted steadily with Lord Stanley on his registration measure, from the conviction that some reform of the kind was imperatively needed. The ministers promised a rival measure; the Ulster association, and their nine defeats on Lord Stanley's move, quickened their speed; and their bill was ready to run a race with Lord Stanley's through the next session. But they brought dislike and some contempt on their bill and themselves, by the unstatesmanlike and somewhat petty method which they adopted now, as too often before, of tacking to their measure—as a sort of postscript—a proposal of vast importance, which seemed to demand previous announcement, and a special

and well-prepared discussion. It was one of the most painful signs of the weakness of the successive Whig ministries, that they had recourse to the vulgar expedient of surprises, almost as often as they had any serious work to do. For the moment, it appeared to give them some advantage, by depriving the opposition of all opportunity for immediate concert, and by exciting afresh an emotion of hope and gratitude among the dissatisfied Liberal party throughout the country; but such emotions grow weaker and less responsive under a series of surprises; and the opposition learned by experience how to act in such cases. In the instance of the Reform Bill, when all the world knew that the men came into power for the purpose of doing a particular work, it was prudent and eminently beneficial to keep secret to the last moment the scope and details of the measure on which every man, in and out of parliament, was speculating. But the perpetual repetition of secrecy and surprising announcements took, after a time, the appearance of a trick; and especially when, as in the case before us, an essential and wholly unlooked-for change was arbitrarily connected with a bill which professed something quite different. The government bill, after treating of the registration of voters in Ireland, went on to propose a radical change in the franchise—its establishment on 'a basis distinct and independent,' and entirely new. The so-called Registration Bill was in fact an unannounced new Reform Bill for Ireland. The valuation under the poor-law—of which we shall presently speak—was to be the entirely new basis; and an occupier of a tenement of the yearly value of £5, under a term of not less than fourteen years, was to enter upon the rights of suffrage hitherto enjoyed by persons having a beneficial interest to the amount of £10.

Those who most seriously desired the extension of the franchise in Ireland were perhaps the most concerned at this method of proposing it. They felt that a question so great was injured by such treatment of it. The ministers had no reason to feel elated by the reception of their measure. Lord Howick, and others who had acted with him in the preceding session, now, when they saw the matter really taken in hand, joined the government party

again; the debate was full and earnest, extending over four nights; yet the ministerial majority for the second reading was only five. Their opponents took for granted that they always knew that they could not carry their bill. There is no need to attribute to them such guilt as would be implied in sporting with the expectations of the disfranchised thousands in Ireland for party purposes; but they cannot be acquitted of the levity or miscalculation—to say the least of it—of bringing forward a measure of such tantalising promise, under circumstances eminently unfavourable to its success. Lord J. Russell's next course was not one which could command the respect of any party. After the division, he announced the desire of the government to lose no time with the bill, and that he should therefore bring it forward again the next Monday. When Monday came, however, he proposed to defer the discussion till after Easter, as he found many members impressed by the proposal of the new franchise, and he wished to obtain more full and accurate information before the matter was further discussed. It is not to be wondered at that this awkward explanation was received with 'shouts of laughter;' nor that the opposition taunted ministers with having never entertained any expectation of passing the all-important provision of their bill. They had had the recess in which to prepare for what they knew must be a critical struggle; and now, after the second stage of the business, and after many protestations of a desire to lose no time, they asked for a pause, in order to procure information enough to proceed upon in the discussion of their own measure. The postponement proposed was to the 23rd of April; and from Lord Stanley himself down to the lowest Irish newspapers in the repeal interest, there was one loud protestation of belief that the real aim of the ministers was to drive Lord Stanley's measure to the end of the session, and not to carry their own. Lord Stanley, meantime, gave early notice that he should contest to the last the proposal of a £5 qualification. The immediate consequence was, that, prior to all discussion, the ministers raised the qualification from £5 to £8.

When the House went into committee on the 26th of April, Lord Howick moved an amendment on the first

clause, designed for the better ascertainment of that 'beneficial interest' of the occupier, which was practically a constant difficulty in the determining of rating and electoral qualification. The amendment, in fact, brought before the committee the question whether the amount of poor-rate paid should be the sole qualification of a voter, whether he had a beneficial interest in his holding or not; or whether a beneficial interest should be maintained as a test of the right to vote. Sir R. Peel and others saw that the fate of the amendment would decide that of the bill. But, when Lord Howick's amendment was carried by a majority of 21, Lord J. Russell proposed delay, to consider whether ministers must withdraw their measure. They concluded not to withdraw it, as Lord Howick declared that his amendment proposed a merely supplementary qualification, and not one which should supersede that provided in the bill. From this time, the scene in committee was painful and humbling—every Liberal member who came forward had something essential to propose about the franchise, different from what any one else had thought of; the government were irresolute and changeable; the opposition laughed and triumphed. The final division took place on the qualification clause, when there was a majority of 11 against ministers, supported as they were by O'Connell and his influence. If all else had been favourable, the vacillation of ministers among the propositions of their own supporters was enough to insure the loss of their bill. They seemed to be influenced by the last speaker, after the manner of persons ignorant of their business; and they shifted the amount of rating again and again, as if they did not know that, with every such change, they were proposing to admit or to exclude half or two-thirds of a constituency with a stroke of the pen. Here, however, was a close of the unhappy business. It was impossible to go on; and Lord J. Russell moved that the chairman should quit the chair. Nor could Lord Stanley's bill be proceeded with during that session. The whole transaction ended without other results than aggravated provocation of the Irish, who had been tantalised to no purpose—great loss of the time and patience of parliament—and an irrecoverable decline of the Whig ad-

ministration in the esteem and good-will of their supporters, and the estimation of the nation at large. Here was an end, too—and this was perhaps no bad result—of all speculation about the cure of political corruption being the true means of the redemption of Ireland. If Ireland was to wait for this, it would be too late to redeem her at all; for it was clear that electoral renovation would not be granted to her while there were two parties in the British parliament.

5. Some of the most earnest and thoughtful of the friends of Ireland were among the many who looked for her redemption at the other end of the scale from the advocates of an affectionate despotism. Instead of desiring that the people should have everything done for them, and be kept out of sight of the law which they hated and distrusted, these friends of the Irish proposed to induce a knowledge and love of the function and prevalence of law by making the inhabitants of Ireland learn self-government by the discipline of good municipal institutions. England was now sprinkled all over with little republics, where her citizens would receive the best political education in the best manner; and it was thought that a similar system would do for Ireland all that she needed, by improving her people socially and politically, and bringing her into a relation with England which would silence for ever the cry of repeal. The proposal was a good and great one; and, but for the deep underlying mischief, it might have largely availed, in course of years. But this mischief was exactly in the way, in the present case. It must precisely intercept the beneficial results of municipal reform; for, among all the curses attributable to the insecurity of title to the possession of land in Ireland, none is more fatal than its prevention of the growth of a middle class.

There was no question on which the passions of the two great parties in parliament became more fierce, as the debate was renewed from year to year, than on this—of municipal reform in Ireland. There was hardly a man, in or out of parliament, who did not take a side, with all the decision and certainty, and all the wonder and wrath at his opponents, which attend upon the discussion of vital

political questions. It was not only that Lord John Russell declared in his place that this was a 'vital question to the present administration;' it was also known to be vital to the fate of Ireland—whether she was to be governed on one set of principles or the opposite; and again, it was felt to be vital to the fate of Great Britain too, as determining whether she was to halt between two opinions, or to decide finally for that principle of renovation and progress of which the policy of her latest years had been the exponent. Considering these things, the strife could not but be fierce—it was hardly possible for individual opponents to be just to each other; and for the respective parties it was quite impossible. We, however, at the distance of ten or twelve years, can see things more plainly than any one saw them then. We have had grave admonition and mournful rebuke about our confident judgment, our positiveness, our presumptuous and shallow censures of public men and of our own antagonists in argument. While still only half-seeing about Ireland—still 'sounding on a dim and perilous way' in investigating the sources of her woes, we are not so dark and insensible as we were ten years ago—and we are now able to perceive that, if both parties and almost all individual men were wrong, both parties and all leading men were also right.

The views of the respective parties, as declared by their spokesmen, were these:

The Whig ministers and the Liberal party generally regarded municipal reform in Ireland as an essential part of the scheme of institutional renovation which the nation had deliberately adopted. It was the proper and necessary finish of parliamentary reform in all the three kingdoms, and borough-reform in England, Wales and Scotland. They considered it especially indispensable in regard to Ireland, because Ireland needed, above every other part of the empire, an identification with England in her political privileges and fortunes. They regarded municipal reform as more necessary in Ireland than elsewhere, because an abuse existed in Ireland, remediable by these means, perfectly singular in its mischief and intolerableness—the injurious distinction of creeds established by the existing corporation system. In the time of James I., municipal

officers who would not enforce Protestant modes of worship in their respective towns were ejected, and creatures of the government put in their places; and the new holders of office surrendered the rights and privileges of their townsmen into the king's hands, and accepted fresh charters which allowed scarcely any powers to the local residents, and left the nomination to all important offices to the government. The government nominees had power to appoint their successors; and thus, the exclusion of the Catholic majority from local power and privilege was as complete as the Protestant minority chose. In 1672, some relaxation of the Protestant monopoly took place in virtue of the 'new rules' issued by the Irish government. But the Revolution, sixteen years afterwards, annihilated the virtue of these rules, and all social advantage derivable from municipal institutions was again monopolised by Protestants. Within this monopoly, smaller monopolies arose, till, in many Irish towns, the corporate bodies had become mere family parties—all offices being held by relations and dependents of the chief member, or of a great Protestant landlord in the neighbourhood; and even the parliamentary member being merely a nominee of these nominees. These usurped powers became actually subjects of proprietorship—being transmitted by inheritance, openly sold to competitors, and recognised as a ground of compensation by the national government when the union interfered with the right of these 'patrons' or proprietors to send members to parliament. Under such a holding of municipal power and privilege, there could of course be no impartial administration of justice. No one can wonder at the prevalent distrust and hatred of the law in Ireland, when it is considered how hopeless was the chance of the Catholic and the man of liberal politics in a locality where justice must be sought, if at all, from magistrates, juries, and minor officials, who were chosen for their zeal in an adverse religious and political faith. Then again, a large number—in some cases almost the whole body—of burgesses were non-residents, patronised by the officials, and introduced to borough privileges in swarms, while the inhabitants were left helpless, to be victimised by their impertinent oppressors. The charity

funds, the lands, the borough houses, the water-works—all the property which should have made their towns healthful and handsome, and have relieved their poor, and educated the young, and raised the condition of the whole local population—went into the pockets of half-a-dozen men, or into utter waste and loss. The commissioners' reports tell of thousands of acres of land which would, at that date (1833), have readily brought in £1 an acre, being let, on leases of ninety-nine years, for 1*s.* an acre, or less; of tolls and customs being pocketed, as a matter of course, by the mayor and aldermen, while the streets were unpaved, dark, and never cleaned; of the noble water-works of Archbishop Bolton at Cashel being destroyed from utter neglect—miles of underground conduits being choked up, and the water turned off for the convenience of a miller—the whole being recoverable by an outlay of £500, while the corporate officers were making presents to one another of many thousands annually, by iniquitous leases and bargains. Here was a case as strong as need be. In desiring to reform it, and in stating the inestimable value of free municipal institutions, the Whig government and the Liberal party were eminently right. Where they were wrong was in assuming too easily that free municipal institutions would answer in Ireland, as in England; in concluding that the true reason for the opposition of their antagonists was a fear for the Protestant Church in Ireland, which overpowered all consideration for the good of the majority; and in unscrupulously charging their adversaries with a predilection for tyranny, in their advocacy of a centralising principle of government for Ireland, and with rapacity and corruption in desiring to retain the profits of the old system for their local partisans.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, seem to have been right in perceiving that the peculiar condition of society in Ireland must prevent the full and free working of popular institutions. They seem to have laid hold of the fearful truth recently expressed by one who loves Ireland too well to be of any party, in regard to her interests. 'A government based on popular institutions,' says Mr. Pim, 'fails to secure order, unless it have the

support of the people. Ireland appears to labour under the difficulty of having aristocratic social institutions without an aristocracy; and the mechanism of a popular government, inapplicable to its present social condition, because it does not possess an educated middle class, by whom these popular institutions might be worked.' The aim of the conservatives was to prevent the assignment to Ireland of 'the mechanism of a popular government, inapplicable to its present social condition.' They had a perfect right to prefer a centralising principle of government for a country in so peculiar a condition; and the question of their credit should have depended altogether on the merits or demerits of their centralising scheme. From this point of view, they appear to have been more clear-sighted than the Whigs; while from another, they seem to have committed the grossest error belonging to the time and occasion. They adhered, consciously or unconsciously, to the hope and expectation which founded the Church in Ireland, and has kept it there, *vi et armis*, as a missionary establishment. 'For the last three centuries,' said a contemporary writer, 'Ireland has only had a provisional government, constituted for a state of things dependent on the duration of popery, which was supposed to be a temporary evil.' To this fatally foolish supposition, the Conservatives adhered, in their opposition to municipal reform—not avowedly, and probably not consciously; but all that they proposed, and every step when they opposed, was vitiated by a tacit assumption that, while the Catholics were to be cared for, it was as a suffering multitude who were to be Protestants ere long. This gave a provisional air to the proposals of the Conservatives, and disabled them from appreciating the Whig aim of settling matters on a basis which would endure. Again, it was natural for the Conservatives to remonstrate against the rashness—as they thought it—of encouraging the unhappy disposition of the Irish to hanker after some vague political remedy for miseries purely social or moral. It was natural that they should look upon the Whigs, when holding out unreasonable hopes to the Irish from municipal reform, as too much resembling O'Connell in his promises of repeal and its blessings. But they were

felt to be quite as wrong as their adversaries ever were in charging those adversaries with vulgar popularity-hunting, with hiding a fear of O'Connell under a mask of political action, and with treating Ireland with a stupid and insulting good-will, like that of a man who gives a clever child a watch that will not go—moreover, at the end of an explanation of the beauty and value of watches.

Both parties desired, earnestly and perhaps equally, the sweeping away of the intolerable abuse of the existing corporations. They differed, broadly and passionately, as to what the substitute should be; and they resembled one another but too much in the pertinacity with which they affixed discreditable imputations upon each other.

The history of the five years' struggle to establish 'normal schools' of political education in seventy-one towns of Ireland, where 900,000 inhabitants might begin their training in free citizenship, was briefly this:—

In 1833, the Irish corporation commissioners began their work of inquiry. In 1836, the royal speech at the opening of the session expressed a hope that parliament would be able to apply a remedy to the abuses of the Irish corporations, 'founded upon the same principles' as the Municipal Reform Acts for England and Scotland. The Irish attorney-general, Mr O'Loghlen, early introduced the ministerial bill, which was allowed to be read without opposition, a second time, on the 29th of February, as a sort of pledge that all parties were disposed to abolish the existing system, whatever they might do towards establishing a better. After this, Sir R. Peel explained his views, which were, in their main points, that, in the existing condition of Ireland, it was hopeless that free institutions would work, for want of the class specially needed to work them; that therefore the place of the old corporations, now to be abolished, should not be filled by new corporate bodies, which would only introduce new dissension and corruption, but that the sheriffs and recorders should be appointed by the crown, the local affairs of the inhabitants being managed by commissioners, chosen by popular election. He did not conceive it possible to deprive the body of existing freemen

of their rights, because they had long ago become proprietary and hereditary; and he believed, finally, that the only way to preserve any impartiality in the administration of provincial affairs in Ireland was to vest the principal appointments in the crown, as from the great preponderance of Catholics, the exclusion of Protestants now, under a system of popular election, would be as complete and unfair as the exclusion of Catholics had hitherto been, under a system of self-election in the corporations. This last reason was not one which increased the popular opinion of Sir R. Peel's wisdom; as it was clear that it begged the question of the impartiality of the crown, and it could proceed only upon the supposition that the Catholics would have the same confidence as Sir R. Peel himself in that impartiality. Lord F. Egerton moved, in accordance with the views of Sir R. Peel, the abolition of the old corporations, without the creation of any new; decreeing the government of towns by officers appointed by the crown. He would even have the commissioners for the administration of borough property provided in the same manner. This motion was thrown out by a large majority. But its theory met with better success in the Lords. There, the bill was 'amended' by cutting out of it all the clauses relating to the constitution of new corporate bodies. Out of 140 clauses, 106 had been in substance omitted, while 18 had been added; and, while the 'amended bill' abolished corporate institutions entirely, it actually preserved to many of the officials who profited by the old system the power and emolument of their situations. Of course, this was not to be endured. The Commons rejected the amendments, and sent back the bill to the Lords in nearly its original state. Lord Melbourne was outvoted by a majority of 97 in an attempt to get the bill reconsidered. It was sent down to the Commons, with a statement of their Lordships' reasons for adhering to their amendments. On the 30th of June, Lord John Russell moved that the amendments should be considered that day three months: the House agreed; and thus the bill was lost for that session.

In introducing the bill again in the next February, Lord J. Russell was understood to intimate that the Melbourne

administration would stand or fall by it. It was, he said, 'a vital question to the present administration;' so the opposition knew what they had to expect and to do, and the contention was very fierce. Lord F. Egerton repeated his motion of the preceding year. The debate lasted over three nights, and was of great interest from the clear grounds taken by both parties. The reformers dwelt upon the sacrifice of all other interests to that of the Church, which they charged upon the Conservatives, urging home upon them their fear of the Catholic majority of Ireland—a fear which was by no means unreasonable, considering the oppression under which the Catholics had suffered, and the possible effects of reaction. Lord Stanley avowed, in committee, that if he saw the Church in a more secure position, some of his strongest objections to the bill would be removed; but it was not candid to represent this as the only ground of the opposition. Their highest and principal ground was the dissimilarity of Irish and English character and circumstances, which rendered it impossible that the same institutions should work alike in the two countries. It was remarked that some of the opposition speakers, who had done their utmost in debate, were absent from the division. The ministers had a majority of 80. On the third reading, their majority fell to 55.

The day before the second reading in the House of Lords, a gathering of peers took place at Apsley House, to agree upon what should be done. A considerable number were for throwing out the bill at once, but the Duke of Wellington overruled them, with advice which, by their account, was highly characteristic. He willed that the bill should go into committee; and when asked how he would then have it dealt with, he said it would be time enough to think of that when it was there. Before this, a report had got abroad, which was now believed—that the Conservative leaders would pass a Municipal Reform Bill, if complete security was at the same time afforded to the Church; though it was not easy to see how this could be done, to the satisfaction of the Conservatives, but by still subordinating the Catholic majority to a favoured Protestant minority. The next move of the Duke of

Wellington confirmed the rumour. On the 5th of May, he proposed a postponement of the discussion, on the ground of wishing to see what would be done in the other House about the tithe and poor-law questions: and he obtained a majority over ministers of 77. The House of Commons proceeded slowly; and when the 9th of June arrived, the Lords again postponed their debate, leaving the premier helpless under their majority of 86. The speedy dissolution of parliament, in consequence of the death of the king, stopped the progress of the measure; and thus again, at the risk of great irritation in the Irish against the peers, it once more stood over to another session.

This was the date of the famous compromise before related, when Lord J. Russell consented to the sacrifice of the appropriation principle for the sake of Sir R. Peel's surrender of his opposition to the Irish Municipal Reform Bill. All went smoothly for some time—the Conservatives fully admitting that, if there were to be corporations at all, they should be appointed by popular election. But then came the question of the franchise; and the parties found it impossible to agree on the qualification. Sir R. Peel desired a £10 qualification, with the test of rating. Lord J. Russell would admit either the parliamentary qualification of £10, or the test of rating with a £5 qualification. Sir R. Peel would not yield. The ministers assembled their supporters at one of the government offices, to consult whether they could concede anything further, for the sake of getting the bill passed. It was decided that there should be no further compromise; and on the 11th of June, they carried their point of the qualification by a majority of 20. The bill passed the Commons by a majority of 35. But in the Lords, a modified £10 qualification was substituted immediately. Other amendments were introduced which it was wholly impossible for the authors of the measure to sanction. The bill was bandied between the Houses, as it had been two years before, and dropped in exactly the same manner.

In 1839, the royal speech declared the reform and amendment of the municipal corporations of Ireland to be essential to the interests of that country; and in eight

days afterwards—on the 14th of February—Lord Morpeth brought forward the subject again—for the fourth year in succession. By this time, the leaders of both parties were ready for further concession. The ministers proposed an £8 qualification, with the test of rating to the poor-law. In towns where the poor-law should have been in operation for three years, the franchise was to be assimilated to the English. Sir R. Peel and Lord Stanley agreed to this proposal, and rebuked the inveteracy of opposition manifested by some of their own party. This opposition was carried into committee; but the bill passed the Commons on the 15th of July. The premier pointed out to the opposition Lords that by this time the bill was almost their own, it being made up of a series of amendments in the parts which had been the subject of argument; but Lord Lyndhurst, in his apprehension that, 'except in the northern province of Ireland, there would be in every town a Radical and Roman Catholic mayor, a Radical and Roman Catholic town-council, Radical and Roman Catholic magistrates,' moved and carried an amendment about the franchise, with several others, which, again, it was impossible for the authors of the measure to submit to. Thus fruitlessly closed the fourth year of the debate. Lord Lyndhurst could not wonder if he was more unpopular in Ireland than any other man in the empire.

In 1840, the bill passed rapidly through the Lower House, being supported by Sir R. Peel. Lord Lyndhurst was again ready for opposition; and his amendments were so many and so injurious to the measure, that it required much command of temper on every hand to bear quietly with so audacious a resistance to the conviction and will of the majority—of the majority, that is, everywhere but in the House of Lords. There he carried all before him—carried his provisions for the patronage of the old freemen, his £10 qualification, his frustration of the appointment of candidates for the shrievalty by the town-councils, and several other points. When the bill was sent down to the Commons, they demurred at the amendments, held conferences, argued, and finally yielded; and the deteriorated and corrupted bill became law on the 10th of August, 1840.

The main provisions of the bill were these. Ten corporate towns were continued as corporations under the provisions of the act—being constituted of mayor, aldermen, and burgesses. Thirty-seven smaller corporations were dissolved—nineteen of which possessed corporate funds to the amount of £100 a year and upwards, and eighteen which had corporate funds to a smaller amount. Any of these boroughs which had a population exceeding 3000 might have a charter on petition of the majority to the queen in council. As for the others, their corporate funds were to be vested in commissioners, to be applied to public objects. Some towns were already supplied with commissioners, under a former act. Those which had not any commissioners were divided into two classes; in the first of which were towns empowered to elect a board of commissioners, in the proportion of one commissioner to every 500 inhabitants; and in the second were the smaller towns whose corporate funds were to be administered by the poor-law guardians of the locality. The way was left open for the smaller towns to rise to the faculty of having commissioners, and of obtaining a charter of incorporation, when ready for the privilege. The franchise was a household suffrage, with a £10 qualification. In other points, the bill closely resembled the English act.

There is no doubt about the beneficial operation of this measure, spoiled as it was. The sweeping away of the old corporations was a great blessing; and this, and the exclusion of the centralising principle, reconciled the Liberal party to the passage of the bill, in preference to waiting longer. How it might have fared with Ireland at this day under the undisturbed operation of the measure, many may dispute, but none can affirm; for the great underlying mischief was about to stir and heave, and overthrow all hope that by municipal reform, or any other measure yet attempted, the redemption of Ireland was to be achieved.

6. As for those who acknowledged a deeper necessity than any of these, from having obtained a glimpse of the great underlying mischief, they desired a poor-law for Ireland, and had more to say in favour of their specific than sincere men were willing to controvert. Whether

Ireland should have a poor-law of the nature of the English one was perhaps, of all the political questions of our time, the most difficult of decision. O'Connell himself, who was undoubtedly in earnest on this question, unmingled as it was with any party feelings and devices, vacillated for years between the perplexities on either hand. He, for once, took pains to learn and consider the economical considerations of the case; and when they were fresh in his mind, was full of hope and joy for Ireland, and of gratitude, in which he called on all his countrymen to join, to the Whig ministry which proposed the effectual boon. Then, again, his doubts would recur—doubts whether the pauperism of Ireland could be ascertained so far as to justify an invocation to it to come and be fed; doubts whether it might not peril the souls, or at least injure the spiritual interests of the Catholics, to interfere with their private alms-giving; doubts whether the mendicancy of the poor had not something holy in it with which it was impious to meddle; doubts whether the glory and grace of the Irish character would not disappear under the operation of sound economical principles and methods; and, finally, doubts whether the ordinary run of Irish landlords could or would support the poor of their own districts. Up to the year 1836, he had constantly opposed the introduction of any poor-law system into Ireland; and it is possible that some of the personal motives ascribed to him at the time—the dread of weakening the popular dependence upon himself, and of losing his influence by the assimilation of Ireland to England—might have been more or less the cause of his opposition; but if so, all such considerations gave way before the disclosures of the commission of inquiry in 1836. It appears probable that the agitator himself was unaware of the misery of the Irish poor—the abiding, unintermitting misery which they had come to regard as the condition of their life.* This appears probable from the considerations that his own tenantry were in a very wretched condition under the management of middle-men, over whom he exercised no supervision; and that he met his countrymen only in the aspect of adorers of himself—in worshipping crowds, on days of political business, or

groups of watchers on holidays, who cheered on his beagles, and echoed the huntsman's cry, and laughed with delight at seeing the great liberator enjoying his sport. It is probable that the exposures of the commissioners' report were as new and terrific to O'Connell himself as to any member of the government; and that they overpowered for a time his worst tendencies, and made him, for a short interval, a single-hearted patriot. The period was very short. Under the impression of the dreadful anecdotes of the report—of men lying for weeks on damp straw in a mud hovel, because they were too weak from hunger to rise and go in search of a better fate; of the feeding on 'yellow weed' and unripe potatoes; of the artificial spasms and vomitings induced for the sake of getting warmth and shelter in the cholera hospitals; while these things were fresh in his imagination, O'Connell wrote to the electors of Kilkenny on the absolute necessity of a poor-law for Ireland. He added to his reasons of necessity an offer of one more chance to England of escaping a repeal of the union. If she did not give Ireland a good poor-law, she must undergo repeal. He still feared mischief from the poor-law, because he could not, at least he did not, separate the abuses and fatal operation of the corrupted poor-law of Elizabeth from its principle; and he pointed to the economical and moral devastation it had caused in England as consequences certain to occur in Ireland: yet, so fearful was the existing wretchedness, that it scared him from all speculation for the future, and compelled him to call for a system of legal charity, without a moment's delay. While it was preparing, he fell back somewhat from his new convictions; told the trades-unions that it was bad government that had made beggars; that good government was the best poor-law; that a poor-law would keep down wages, and increase pauperism; and that the House of Lords would make this law a means of subjecting the people to the great landlords. He should prefer a tax on absentees, to be applied in promoting emigration, and in maintaining asylums for the aged, the infant, and the sick.

In the session of 1837, when the Irish Poor-law Bill was introduced by the government, Mr. O'Connell

declared that, seeing its necessity, he should not oppose it; but he assailed every important part of the measure, separately, while he declared himself a supporter of the whole. His pleas were curiously contradictory. The Irish would never enter workhouses; yet these houses would maintain men in idleness who ought to be at work upon the land. The land could not maintain the poor—the production being only one-fourth that of England, and one-half what, considering the inferiority of the soil, it ought to be; yet, this bill would make the people the slaves of the landlords. The natural poor-law—of sympathy—was the best; and Ireland's charity hitherto the glory of Ireland, would be extinguished by the imposition of a legal charity; yet, he would support asylums, and no other charitable institutions willingly, because asylums for the infirm and sick could not encourage fraud and mendicancy. He declared that a poor-law would only swell the numbers—then amounting to nearly two millions and a half—of persons absolutely destitute for a large portion of every year; yet he ridiculed the notion of union-houses, because they would hold only 80,000, and claimed equal assistance for the two millions and a half. While protesting his belief that the measure would aggravate pauperism, and suddenly extinguish private charity, he protested against the gradual introduction and extension of the institution, and claimed immediate and full rescue by means of it for the starving millions of his countrymen. Thus shifting were his views while he declared himself a supporter of the government, and voted for the bill. He deserved, by his previous conduct, the imputation, that he was taking what could be got from England, while industriously providing for the failure of the measure by disgusting his countrymen with it beforehand; but the impression derived by an impartial reader from his speeches in parliament is, that he really was perplexed by the difficulties of the case. His intellect had, in fact, by this time, become so injured by his habits of partiality and exaggeration, and tampering with truth for patriotic purposes, that it had really become irksome and difficult to him to entertain any question so serious in his own

view as to compel him to balance the evidence of its respective sides. With all his astuteness in the conduct of intrigues, and the management of the Irish mind, he had become incapable of apprehending distinctions which were all-important in the consideration of measures founded on any principle; as, for instance, in his declaration of the next session, that the 'strange distinction' between 'poverty' and 'destitution' was not practical—was too nice for Ireland—and so forth; whereas this distinction —the ground-work of the whole poor-law reform in England, and institution in Ireland—is as broad and palpable as the distinction between a householder and a vagrant. In that next session, of 1838, Mr. O'Connell took his stand decidedly—he said finally—against the measure. He declared that he had before wanted moral courage to oppose it; but now he had grown older and somewhat firmer. The fact probably was, that the first agonising impression of the misery of Ireland had worn off, and his natural prepossessions, as an adventurer, as a man of reckless passions, and as a Catholic, impressed with the blessedness and holiness of spontaneous alms-giving, now recovered their sway, and led him to oppose the introduction of an institution which was too regular and exact, too legal and impartial, too repressive of wrong, and favourable to homely good, to be otherwise than distasteful and alarming to him. In the final period of legislation, therefore, O'Connell went against the bill, with all his forces; and among those forces he enlisted every truth of political economy which he could apply against a compulsory charity in general, and such treatment of the misery of Ireland in particular. His last appearance on this question in parliament was in the character of a rigid political economist.

The case was indeed perplexing enough to sounder thinkers than O'Connell; and his conduct may be regarded as a mere exaggeration of the thought of the time on this question. The very officials themselves were divided as to whether Ireland should have a poor-law or not. Some of the commissioners were in favour of it, and others against it: their third report was against it—the secretary for it. The greater number of political economists in

England were for it; but a few of the most eminent were against it.

In an abstract view, the case was clear enough. The unbounded spontaneous charity of the Irish, which makes the family that have potatoes for the day take in and feed the family that have none, is a fatal encourager of recklessness, as the givers expect to be destitute and thus fed, in their turn. A legal charity would act as a check here. The imposition of rates upon the holders of the land would act as a regulator upon the fatal system of land-letting which prevailed in the south and west of Ireland; a system from which individuals could extricate themselves only by means of such an arrangement as this. The landlords must be brought to reason, and thought, and principle, by the obligation to support their own poor. The occupiers would be benefited—their expenses being shared more equally with the landlord; whereas the true incidence of the prevalent almsgiving was at present upon them. Instead of this indefinite expenditure the occupier would now have one which he could estimate; and he would no doubt prefer laying out his money in improving his land to supporting men in idleness; and thus further means of prosperity would be continually growing. If Mr. O'Connell was right in saying that the Irish, with their love of uncontrolled freedom, would never enter the workhouses, well and good; since they could keep out of it only by maintaining themselves. If they did enter the workhouses, and idly stay there—well and good too; for this would relieve the immediate pressure of competition for potato grounds, and would afford opportunity for nominal rents to come down to the level of real ones, and some honesty might be introduced into transactions between landlord and tenant. A middle class might thus be growing up; a class of improving small farmers, interposed between the landlord and the cottier, for whom there had hitherto appeared no alternative between a precarious and transient occupation of land and mendicancy. With the class of farmers must grow up a class of *bonâ-fide* labourers. Thus would land and men improve together. There would be increased production from the land—classes of rising men upon it—

a check upon the reckless increase of population—an influx of capital, which would cause further production and improvement; and so on. Such was the expectation of the advocates of an extension of the English poor-law to Ireland; and they added that no country ever afforded such favourable circumstances for the establishment of a poor-law as Ireland did at that time.

As for the opponents of the measure—they dwelt upon the peculiarities of the Irish mind, religion, and social state. This was their ground. They would have had Ireland assisted by a legal charity in regard to the sick and infirm, and to a large scheme of emigration. Further than this they believed the system would not work; and they declared their expectation that the legal charity would be found not to supersede at all the pious almsgiving which had become the religious habit of the Catholic districts. No one seems to have spoken out about the deep underlying mischief which might too probably frustrate all efforts and mortify all expectations. The land was the broad basis on which this great structure was to be founded; and while the title to, and possession of, that land was insecure, this foundation was no better than a shaking bog. In some districts in the west of Ireland, nine-tenths of the population were without means of living in winter. The expectation was that a poor-law would force the landowners to employ the people, in order to escape so enormous a charge as the poor-rate. Landowners elsewhere, whose past and future were ascertained and secure, might venture upon such a work, in the strength of unquestionable possession; but not so men who had grown up in the recklessness of insecurity, and to whom the future was merely a scene of chance. It was fearful enough that the proportion of paupers to the rest of society was twice as large as in England, while the pauper maintenance fund was, in proportion, little more than one-third; and when to this grave fact is added the consideration of the insecurity of the landed property itself which is the basis of the whole, the wisest men, and most philosophical economists, may be excused for doubting whether the English poor-law would work in Ireland.

When the board of commissioners of inquiry recom-

mended, in their report of 1836, a legal charity for the support of the sick and infirm, and for the promotion of emigration, the British parliament and statesmen were not disposed to agree to the suggestion. To take off the weight of the able-bodied from the fund of voluntary charity was the first object; and while the land was so badly tilled, it might prove no kindness to Ireland to remove her strong men to the colonies—if even arrangements for the purpose could have been, at that time, made. It was determined by the ministers to send Mr. Nicholls, one of the poor-law commissioners, to Ireland, as the man fitted above all others to view the state of Irish society with the eye of science as well as of compassion. Mr. Nicholls's commission bore date the 22nd of August 1836; and, after an inquiry of little more than six weeks, he prepared a very able report, which favoured the introduction of the English poor-law into Ireland. It is well known that inquiry is immeasurably facilitated by such science and practical habits as Mr. Nicholls carried with him; and less objection was made to his report, on account of the haste with which it was produced, than might have been expected. But it is also understood how partial and technical may be the observation and inferences of a man so devoted to a great and successful enterprise as Mr. Nicholls was to the administration of the reformed poor-law in England; and it was a charge of the day against his report, that it showed him to have carried his conclusions with him, ready for use, if he found them applicable, and that his observation amounted to not much more than seeing what he was looking for. His report, able as it would have been on an abstract case, able as it was on a partial case, was felt not to make sufficient allowance for so much of the peculiarity of the Irish character as depends on religious faith and guidance, nor to appreciate the hanhazard character of the proprietorship of Irish estates. His view is derivable from one paragraph of his report: 'Ireland is now suffering under a circle of evils, producing and reproducing each other: want of capital produces want of employment—want of employment, turbulence and misery—turbulence and misery, insecurity—insecurity prevents the intro-

duction and accumulation of capital—and so on. Until this circle is broken, the evils must continue, and probably augment.' The largest omission here is of the notification that the insecurity is owing to other causes than those specified. The unhinging of society which results from a long course of precarious holding of land, is of a kind not to be rectified by a poor-law, which proceeds on the supposition that the landlords are the secure owners of the soil, and therefore able, as well as liable, to support its burdens. Considering the habit of mendicancy in the country, begging was no test of destitution; and the workhouse test was recommended to be strictly enforced. On a calculation that from eighty to a hundred workhouses would supply the requisite accommodation, the expense was estimated at from £700,000, to £800,000. If this amount were advanced as a loan from the imperial treasury, it might be repaid in annual instalments of 5 per cent. from the rates, with the interest—without any greater burden to the landlords and occupiers than was now imposed by the voluntary charity which came mainly out of their pockets at last. The payment of rates was proposed to be divided equally between the landlord and the occupier, by which it was believed and hoped that the landlord would find his burden heavier, and the occupier lighter than hitherto. The new right of supervision over its members, which would arise in society by the establishment of a right to maintenance, was to be first manifested in the appointment of a warden or head-borough, who would keep watch against the increase of destitution through fault, and the spread of mendicancy. Precautions were to be taken against a preponderance of magistrates at the boards of guardians, and no clergyman, of any denomination, was to be concerned in poor-law administration during the prevalence of religious rancour in the country. It was thought best that the English board of commissioners should extend their administration to Ireland, rather than that a separate board should be established in Dublin; that the evils of inexperience and party suspicion might be avoided, and this new link in the union of England and Ireland be made as complete and sound as possible.

The royal speech of 1837 recommended to parliament, in regard to Ireland, the consideration of 'the difficult, but pressing question, of establishing some legal provision for the poor;' and on the 13th of February, Lord J. Russell brought forward the Irish Poor-law Bill. It was founded on Mr. Nicholls's report; and it was sustained as very few measures of consequence are in the House of Commons. Sir R. Peel and Lord Stanley supported it, in its general provisions, and scarcely any one was found to object to it as a whole. It was proceeding favourably through committee when the death of the king deferred its passage for another session. By that time, some change of opinion had taken place, and much more opposition than before was offered by many persons besides Mr. O'Connell. Some had fears about the patronage of the board, in a country so sensitive and on the watch for injury as Ireland now was. Some desired a voluntary assessment by the clergy, for purposes of outdoor relief, in addition to the provisions of the act. And some brought forward their estimates of the population and of the rental, and of the proportion of these in certain districts; and, disbelieving that voluntary charity would cease, showed plainly, as they thought, that Ireland could not support a poor-law of this nature. The minorities were, however, small. Mr. O'Connell's question, 'Whether English gentlemen would force on the country a measure which the people rejected?' was answered by a majority of 175 in favour of the bill. In the Lords, the opposition was strong—in speeches, at least, if not in votes. With people outside, this told rather in favour of the measure than against it, as it seemed to show dread of increased burdens by the landlords. Besides the Londonderrys, Rodens, and Lyndhursts, whose opposition had been expected, there were Lords Fitzwilliam, Clanricarde, and Brougham, who declared their expectations of entire failure in the working of the bill. The ministerial majorities were, however, large; and the bill became law in July 1838.

In August the commission met, and appointed Mr. Nicholls to carry out the act in Ireland. He went to Dublin, with sufficient assistance for beginning his arduous work. By the 9th of October, the assistant-commissioners

had returned from their circuits in the provinces, and were joined by more assistants from England. They went into deliberation, and arranged their system in all its details. By the 25th of March following, twenty-two unions were declared; and in eighteen of these, guardians were appointed. Preparations for others were in great forwardness; and something more important still was effected. By the spread of the information furnished by the commissioners, much of the local unpopularity of the measure was converted into support; and where support was not given, there was usually acquiescence. In the course of the next year, 127 unions were declared, and only three remained to be formed. Fourteen workhouses were already opened for the reception of paupers; and the commissioners declared their confidence that the great scheme would work well for the redemption of Ireland. The reception of it by the beggars was curious, as might have been expected by those acquainted with Irish mendicancy in its prosperous days, when it was not, as now, the outward sign of insufferable misery, but rather bore a gay and convivial character. One beggar proudly told a commissioner that he would have little business but for the like of them; another, unwilling to surrender a poor idiot to legal charity, and fearing to be 'lonesome without him,' though finding him 'mighty teasing,' thought it a good thing to be an idiot, to enjoy the roving freedom of the class; another, who hated the 'new jail,' as she persisted in calling the union-house, found her business of mendicancy destroyed by the new agency—would have gone into the house if she could have enjoyed there her tea, and whisky, and tobacco; but, as she could not, took upon her to despise the house, and declared that she would work rather than enter it. The great consolation of this class was in finding 'the hard man' compelled to contribute to the support of the poor; while they felt grief and shame at what they considered the demoralisation of the charitable, who now began to inquire into the case of mendicants, and ask why they did not go into the house. There was a perceptible diminution in the crowds of beggars on the roads, and in the villages; and in the towns, the avowal was made that the workhouses had weeded them of very

destitute cases. When the 'starving seasons' came round —the interval between the complete consumption of one potato crop and the harvest of another—it was evident that more work had been done, and more providence exercised. The early operation of the Irish poor-law was pronounced to be decidedly successful. But it was too soon yet for the warmest advocates of the measure to pledge themselves that it would work the redemption of Ireland.

The immediate consequence of the debates on the virtues or vices of the Whig administration of Ireland was the resignation of Lord Normanby on the first convenient occasion—in the spring of 1839, when he became colonial secretary for a few weeks, and then went to the home department. His policy was continued by his coadjutors, and by Lord Ebrington (soon after Earl Fortescue), who succeeded him in the viceroyalty. His retreat from Ireland did not pacify the opposition. In the session of 1839, the attacks on his government were renewed in both Houses of parliament. In the Commons, Lord J. Russell met them by moving a resolution, on the 15th of April, that it was expedient to adhere to the principles of government which had been of great recent benefit to Ireland. Sir R. Peel moved antagonist resolutions, that it was inexpedient so to pronounce while the Lords' committee of inquiry was still engaged upon its work. These last resolutions were voted down by a majority of 22. In the Upper House, Lord Brougham moved, on the 6th of August, and triumphantly carried, a set of resolutions condemnatory of the Normanby policy—particularly as regarded the administration of justice and the extension of mercy. The ministers were left in a minority of 34, in a House of 138.

The opinion of the country, however, sustained the Irish administration; at least, in its general principles. The prevalent impression, throughout the nation, was, at the time, that the country had never before been so well governed; and there were many who believed that the redemption of Ireland had at length been entered upon. If this has been disproved by the lights of painful experience—if it now appears that the deep underlying

mischief was unrecognised as a fatal obstruction—the Whig administration of Ireland may nevertheless have been an inestimable boon.—It is the way with human affairs that enterprises often fail of their express aims, but never of producing important collateral effects. The Normanby administration did not redeem Ireland; but it proved before the eyes of all men a truth which must be understood before Ireland can be redeemed. It proved that no political government—the justest, the wisest, the most considerate—can rectify evils which are social, and not primarily political. The friendly rulers of Ireland, between the years 1835 and 1840, were not to have the privilege of redeeming her; but they did much to prepare the way; and they removed a great obstruction in extinguishing all just complaint of English misgovernment. Many other obstructions remained which rendered the work of effectual renovation impossible till a higher power than lies in human hands had cleared the way in a manner which it makes the stoutest heart tremble merely to contemplate. It is because this has happened—because the wide sweep of misery has left it clear that the maladies of Ireland are social, and not political—because the great underlying mischief has been heaved up to the surface by the convulsion—because everyone now sees what must be done before Ireland can be redeemed—that we may speak of the hopefulness and cheerful composure with which the spirit of history may review the scenes and struggles of the past. The work now lies open; and the national gaze is beginning to contemplate it. A great work never waits long for the workman; and a greater work than this never presented itself to the human heart and hand. In an advanced age of the world—in the day of high civilisation—here is a nation, full of noble qualities, however corrupted, to be taught how to live—taught from the beginning; led up from a condition of passionate and suffering immaturity into the strength of self-disciplined, industrious, healthful, and prosperous manhood. If it be true that a great work never waits long for the workman, the day of the redemption of Ireland cannot be far off. When it comes, the nation will not altogether forget 'the things that are behind,' in 'pressing forwards to those that are before.' It will not

forget that the experiment of a strenuous administration of justice and mercy was once tried; and that it afforded the needed proof that any political administration was a means too small for the redemption of Ireland.

CHAPTER VII.

Church and State—Church of Scotland—Severance not Dissent—Patronage—Dissent—Resort to Church Extension—Commission of Inquiry—Teinds—Bishops' Teinds—Reports of Commission—Election Struggles—Impotence of the Church—Government favours Church Extension—Incompetence of Parliament and Ministers.

During the political changes and struggles of the period under review, few may have perceived the close connection which is now clear to us, between the disturbed state of the Church and the transitional character of the state. The difficulties that successive governments had in dealing with the religious bodies of the empire, appeared to many a mere coincidence with the death-struggles of parties, and not, as they truly were, another aspect of the same conflict. The ecclesiastical disturbance visible at once in England, Ireland, and Scotland, was as inevitable a sign of the times as the passage of the Reform Bill, or municipal renovation. It was a misfortune to all parties concerned, that the rulers of the state—too ill-prepared for action on the subjects most prominent in their own eyes—were absolutely incapable of intelligent government on ecclesiastical affairs. Their want of knowledge, their inability to comprehend or apply the principles concerned in the ecclesiastical disturbances of the time, were clear enough in the cases which have been already before us; but the complete exhibition of their incapacity took place in reference to the Church of Scotland.

As a preparation for the great scene of the disruption of the Church of Scotland, which will come before us in the final period of this history, we must look into the transactions of Lord Melbourne's government with that Church. We shall see how unaware the ministers were of

what they had to do, and what they were doing; how little they understood the true importance and real bearings of the case. They took no warning by the refusal of the English Tractarians to acknowledge the control of the government in church matters; they took no warning from the united cry of the High Churchmen and Dissenters for a dissolution of the union between Church and State. As Lord Grey had stared with amazement at the Nottingham deputation, so now Lord Melbourne scarcely took pains to observe whether it was the Church or the Dissenters in Scotland who wanted more accommodation and instruction; and neither of these ministers, and no one of the coadjutors of either, seems to have had the remotest idea of its being his business to understand, and decide, and act on a question as important as any that had risen up since the Reformation. And the English public knew and felt no more than their rulers. They did not recognise the struggle that now set in, north of the Tweed, as one which will be conspicuous in all future histories of the progress of opinion—which now means nothing less than the history of human liberties. Even now the greater number of readers and listeners turn away at the first mention of the Scotch Church, in hopelessness of understanding the controversy, or caring about the parties engaged in it. Those who have, from any cause, been interested in the case, believe that its principal features may be clearly and rapidly sketched. At all events, the attempt must be made in a history of the period.

The Scotch Church appears to be the best in which to contemplate the rise and progress of the conflict between the principles of the connection or disconnection of religion with the state, because it has ever been peculiarly hard to Scotch Churchmen to admit the idea of dissent, and to undergo the process of severance from the Establishment. The Scotch Church was designed to be a spiritual republic, whose four judicatories, rising one above the other in gradations of power and authority, were still all elective. The session, the presbytery, the synod, the General Assembly, were all of a representative character, and were assumed to be chosen by the popular voice. This popular election was for a very short time, if ever, a truth; and

the same may be said of the unity of faith presumed to be secured by the Establishment. While the elders and landed proprietors were in fact managing the appointments to office in the Church, many pastors were preaching doctrines which would not bear a comparison with the standards of the Establishment. The General Assembly wished for quiet—dealt gently with heresies—and would have been pleased to hear nothing of that great question of patronage which was, in little more than a hundred years, to explode the Church as a national Establishment. But the people found themselves under a despotism, from the unresisted nomination of the clergy by the patrons. The clergy nominated the elders; and the flocks had really no part whatever in the spiritual republic, where all were declared to be members of one body. The Assembly would not hear of a word of discontent, even from their own members; so the natural consequence followed—the discontented took other measures to make themselves heard. One of them, the courageous Erskine, preached out the state of things from the pulpit—was censured, first by the local synod, and then by the General-Assembly—offered a remonstrance, and was expelled from his pulpit, as were three other clergymen, who had supported his remonstrance. In a century after, these four ministers had become four hundred. But they and their flocks were not Dissenters. They were compelled to separate from the organisation of the Establishment; but they held all its principles—claimed the honour of being the real Church-party in the case, and imitated the proceedings of the Establishment wherever they possibly could, without falling into its corruptions. In our own time these claims have been allowed; and the Secession has been declared eminently conservative of the veritable Church of Scotland.

Another body of seceders, who were driven out also by tyranny, were equally far from being Dissenters. When a patron nominated for minister a man unacceptable to the great body of the congregation, the presbytery refused to ordain him. This happened so often as to be embarrassing to the General Assembly. The Assembly appointed the celebrated 'Galloping Committees,' as they were nick-

named; committees who went about doing the work which the presbyteries refused. Fired by the ridicule cast upon these committees, and by the taunt that the highest power could not control the presbyteries, the Assembly determined to try its hand at coercion. The Assembly enjoined obedience; a member of a presbytery, Mr. Gillespie, evaded it: he was deposed; and he gathered together, outside the walls of the church from which he was driven, a body of men opposed to the existing despotism in the appointment of ministers, and, after 100 years, was recorded as the founder of 120 congregations, constituting the Relief body, as it was called—a body claiming relief from the despotism of patronage. These men also were thus not Dissenters. They had no fault to find with the Church, but only with the perversion of one of her arrangements. At the end of a century, however, from the secession of 1734, the two bodies were called by others, and called themselves, Dissenters; their ministers having, for the most part, adopted the voluntary principle. The Establishment at this time had between 1100 and 1200 churches; a clergy of whom the moderator of the Assembly at that date said that the whole were of Tory politics, except about six; and for supporters, it had the great body of the affluent and powerful throughout Scotland. The Dissenters had 700 churches, a clergy of liberal political opinions, and for supporters a great body of the labouring and some of the middle classes of society in Scotland. When Scotch borough reform removed the oppressions under which this great body had lain, and opened to them a career of civil equality with the Church and Tory party, they bestirred themselves to extend their principles and increase their numbers; and the newspapers of the time tell of the formation of many associations for the promotion and support of voluntaryism in religion.

Thus was the ground of controversy wholly changed. The Secession and Relief bodies had complained of tyranny within the pale of the Church. Now, become Dissenters, they pronounced against the union of the Church and the State. The Church had once ejected discontented members from her own household. Now she felt called upon to wage war with a vast body of Dissenters; and

the time was coming when she must sustain such another secession as must reduce her to a state of forlorn inferiority which she could not at present conceive of.

What did she do while the Dissenters were associating for the promotion of the voluntary principle? There was no time to lose; for a petition was sent up to parliament, in 1837, in favour of a total separation of Church and State, signed in Glasgow by 41,000 people. The Church resolved on church extension, and that as much of the plan as bore on its opposition to the Dissenters should be kept in its own hands. It was necessary to request and obtain the assistance of the state, or a troublesome reference might hereafter be made to the sufficiency of voluntary effort on the present occasion; yet, if the matter were left to government, new churches would be built in far-away places, in country districts yet unprovided, and last of all, or never, in streets of towns where Dissenters' chapels existed already; whereas, it was the very thing wanted to plant a church beside every chapel, in order to put down dissent. Dr. Chalmers avowed that his demand should not stop short of a church for every 1000 inhabitants, sooner or later; and he did not promise to stop short of a church for every 700. On this estimate, and by virtue of ignoring dissenting chapels altogether, and reckoning the Dissenters among the inhabitants destitute of religious guidance, a strong case of spiritual destitution was made out, while nothing more was asked of government than to endow the churches which the Establishment was willing to build. The consequence of the demand was that the government was at first favourable, partly from ignorance of the state of the case, and partly through dread of the evident extension of the doctrine of voluntaryism; the Dissenters quitted that question for a time, to unite their forces against the imposition of burdens for a church which they disapproved; and the Church grew prouder than ever in the prospect of success. Her own subscriptions for new churches, subscriptions paid in by all manner of members—from the purely benevolent who desired the spiritual benefit of the poor and forsaken, to the haughtiest who could not tolerate the Dissenters—in two years amounted to upwards of £200,000.

The successive ministries of Sir R. Peel and Lord Melbourne saw nothing in the application, till the excitement they caused all over Scotland told them to the contrary, but a proposal to provide religious guidance for the destitute; an object which naturally appeared to them unquestionable. In the king's speech prepared by the Peel cabinet, in February 1835, we find this paragraph: 'I feel it also incumbent upon me to call your earnest attention to the condition of the Church of Scotland, and to the means by which it may be enabled to increase the opportunities of religious worship for the poorer classes of society in that part of the United Kingdom.' For two years before this, Lords Melbourne and Brougham, then lord chancellor, had given deputations from Scotland to understand that they were favourable to the object of the Church—no question had been raised in the debate on the address in answer to the royal speech—and the Dissenters found it necessary to bestir themselves to make known the opinion of a vast proportion of Scotchmen that such a grant was needless and dangerous. By the month of May, the Melbourne ministry had learned that the question involved more than people in London had supposed; the lord advocate of Scotland moved for a commission of inquiry into the need; and on the 1st of July, Lord J. Russell appended a proposal to inquire what funds might exist in connection with the Church of Scotland which might be rendered available, so as to obviate a donation from the public purse for objects which a large body of the contributors to the public purse conscientiously disapproved. In the proposal of a commission Sir R. Peel acquiesced, on the ground that the session was too far advanced for a parliamentary committee to effect anything that year.

The commission was sent forth to its work without delay; and great was the clamour about its constitution. All its members but one were Churchmen; and that one was as obnoxious to the Church party as the others were to the Dissenters. The high officials of the Church doubted the fealty of some of the Church members in the commission; and on the last day of July, the Assembly, by their committee, addressed a remonstrance to the

government on the constitution of the commission. No answer was returned; and on the 13th of August, 90 out of 93 members of the Assembly met for the purpose, renewed the remonstrance. When questioned in the House of Lords, Lord Melbourne answered, with his wonted speculative optimism, that a commission which pleased nobody must be a very good one, in times when party-spirit ran high; and that it was a fine thing for men of extreme opinions, like one of the commissioners, who had written a book against Establishments, to be put upon such work as this, as he was pretty sure of growing wiser, and learning to take more moderate views; and then, the vigorous talents which such men ordinarily possess would come into action for the public service. The deepest offence to the Church was—after the proposal to inquire at all—the direction to the commissioners to inquire into the amount of 'unexhausted teinds;' that is, of tithes possessed by landowners, over and above the amount actually expended in their respective neighbourhoods for the support of the Church. In 1707, it had been settled, after much controversy, that the officials who administered church affairs might enlarge stipends, but not erect or endow any new parish without the consent of three-fourths, in value, of the landowners. This arrangement was seen at the time to be so far questionable as to cause a provision to be made that parliament might alter it at pleasure. It was now reasonable to inquire into the working of this arrangement, if there really was a deficiency of church accommodation throughout the country. But a cry about the intended spoliation of private property was made; a cry so loud as to induce Lord J. Russell to publish, in a letter to the head-commissioner, Lord Minto, a disclaimer, in the form of an instruction, not to give occasion for any charge of meddling with private property. Still, the unexhausted teinds had been regarded since 1707, and longer, as private property guaranteed by an express law, the holders foresaw the proposal to repeal the act of 1707, and exclaimed against the devouring rapacity of the Church: the Dissenters protested loudly against any further endowments from the state, under any pretence whatever; and denied, in this case, any pretence of

necessity at all: the Churchmen were offended that parliament had not made them a grant at once, without dispute; and they protested against all inquiry into the workings of their church organisation, and the amount of their funds. There was yet another cause of offence. The class of tithes called bishops' teinds must be dealt with separately. They were appropriated by the crown at the Reformation—bestowed on the bishops while Episcopacy existed in Scotland—and resumed by the crown on its abolition. When stipends fell short, from the parochial teinds being exhausted, the deficiency was made up from the bishops' teinds; but in no other way had the Church of Scotland any claim upon that fund. It had now become the property of parliament, together with the other patrimonial property of the crown surrendered by William IV.; and the general public, as well as the Scotch Dissenters, protested against any appropriation of this national fund to purposes of church extension in Scotland —even before it was ascertained whether such extension was needed. Thus, the commission was as unpopular on every hand as any commission could well be.

In his official letter, Lord John Russell expressed a hope that the greater part of the business would be completed within six months—that is, in readiness for the session of 1836; but this was not possible. In 1837 and 1838, three reports were before the government—on the religious instruction provided for Edinburgh, and for Glasgow, and on teinds. They relate that Dissenters were more numerous than Church members in Edinburgh and Glasgow—and especially the most earnest and steadfast class, the communicants; that the less opulent Dissenters had provided much larger accommodation than the more opulent Establishment; that the church accommodation in Edinburgh exceeded the legal standard; that it fell short of that standard in Glasgow, but still went far beyond the existing need, as there were, as in Edinburgh, 20,000 unlet seats—for the most part of the cheapest order. As for the teinds, some of the unexhausted ones were held by land-owners who were Dissenters; and it must require great consideration before these could be taken from the holders for purposes of church extension. As for the

amount, it fell but little below the sum of the actual stipends; and it was evidently a very serious matter to think of nearly doubling the revenues of the Church by taking funds out of the hands of private holders, some being Dissenters, to whom they had descended as property guaranteed by law for more than a century.

When the excitement caused by this inquiry was at the height, the elections of 1837 occurred. The Church party, animated by the clergy, strained every nerve to drive out the ministerial candidates, in hope of giving a finishing blow to the weak and unpopular Whig government, and bringing in men who would give them church extension and a triumph over the Dissenters. The Dissenters strove as earnestly on the other side; not from any call of trust and gratitude for what the Whig government had done, but in the hope that their timely aid now, in conjunction with the information of the report—so strongly in their favour—would procure serious attention to their case. But for the Dissenters, the Whig candidates would have been excluded from all the principal places in Scotland. It was hoped now that the prodigious excitement manifested during the elections would give the ministers some hint of the importance of the next move they might make. The evidence was before their eyes that the Scotch Church was a failure in its character of a missionary church, and therefore not entitled on that ground to aid from the community generally, or at the expense of the Dissenters, who were doing her missionary work without aid from any quarter. The worst district in Edinburgh had, at that date, six times as many ministers as the average of Scotch towns; and yet, out of a population of 25,000, only 1070 church seats were let to the inhabitants of the district. The report of the city mission also disclosed appalling facts of the vice and wretchedness of whole districts where the Church was a mere name, and the whole work was left to the zeal and charity of voluntaries. Yet, in the face of these facts—in full view of the extraordinary excitement which pervaded all Scotland—the vast public meetings, the gatherings of synods and societies for the protection of religious liberty—in the full hearing of warnings from all England and from

Ireland of the serious consequences of a government pledging itself to church extension at a period when the final struggle of our Established Churches for existence had manifestly begun—in the midst of circumstances as serious as these, Lord J. Russell confirmed the agitating rumour which had been abroad since the elections, that the government was going to pledge itself to church extension in Scotland. Subsequent events proved—what, indeed, few ever doubted—that the ministers did not know what they were doing. The universal excitement on ecclesiastical subjects was inexplicable to them. Their training and position did not enable them to enter into the importance of the question of Church Establishments to the great middle class in both England and Scotland, who understand the principle of it perhaps better than any other which ever comes before the government. The ministers did not see that a second Reformation might be the consequence of even a single ministerial act at such a juncture; and so they went intrepidly on, plunging into a matter which they did not understand—to the amazement of men on both sides in the quarrel. Such inability of statesmen to enter fully into religious questions, while not surprising, is a strong argument on the side of the opponents of the union of Church and State; and it was so used, at this date, by the Tractarians on the one hand and the Dissenters on the other; and there was nothing in the condition of any of the three Establishments to shame the plea. In the English Church, the prelates, the clergy generally, and the popular body in the Church, were parting asunder, with mutual reproaches of tendency to schism and unseemly disturbance. The dreadful position and reputation of the Protestant Church in Ireland was a subject so familiar as to have become wearisome; and now, the Scotch Church had challenged her adversaries to a conflict which was to end in her hopeless humiliation. Yet the ministers remained unconscious of the gravity of the occasion. Lord Melbourne and Lord J. Russell said irreconcilable things on the same night in the two Houses; and when they had compared notes, and come to an agreement what to state, it was that they proposed to extend the endowments of the Scotch Church. For this

object, they intended to repeal the act of 1707, with regard to the unexhausted parochial teinds, permitting certain authorities to divide the parishes, and give the teinds to church purposes. At the same time, large parishes in the Highlands or elsewhere were to be endowed, from the bishops' teinds or some other dues of the crown. These teinds were now, as has been explained, national property, at the disposal of parliament. On the avowal of the ministerial intention of giving them to the Scotch Church, a general cry arose—a question of where government would stop. If such aid was given to a Church which had proved a failure wherever its work should have been most vigorous, and whose need of aid was denied by a great majority of its own countrymen, what should not be done for England, whose metropolis exhibited more spiritual destitution than all Scotland together? Every one knew that if equal measure were dealt to the English Church, or any proposal of the kind mentioned, the destruction of the Church was inevitable.

There was not much in the aspect of parliament to gratify such Scotchmen as might be present at debates on the great subject. When Lord Aberdeen brought the matter forward, on the 30th of March 1838, we find one speaker after another referring to the extreme thinness of the House; and Lord Aberdeen actually declaring himself wholly unable to comprehend what the excitement of the Scotch Dissenters was about. They were not divided from the Church by any disagreement in doctrine, but only by a hair-breadth, as it were, about matters of arrangement, in which he could not see that this question was concerned. 'He assured their Lordships that not only had he never known anything like the interest which existed on this subject, but he verily believed that never had any question of domestic policy so much agitated the people of Scotland since the union of the two kingdoms.' Lord Aberdeen did not see the meaning of the movement, any more than the ministers. The debate was a melancholy and humbling one—a natural consequence of the hesitating mind and tentative action which the ministry had manifested on this most serious subject. Lord Aberdeen's motion was for certain returns relative to the Church of Scotland. He

stated the expensiveness of the commission, assumed the duty of the government to afford supplies, through Church Establishments, to spiritual destitution, wherever it was pointed out; protested against the appropriations announced by the government, and declared them to be spoliations; and, finally, taxed Lord Melbourne with breach of faith in first inducing the Church to build places of worship on a pledge that government would endow them, and then refusing such endowment. Lord Melbourne's reply was indignant: 'I deny, in the strongest manner, in the most decisive terms, and in the most explicit language in which one gentleman can speak to another, that I ever entered into such an undertaking.' And Lord Melbourne was clearly right. The churches were built or intended before any commission was issued; and the commission was one of inquiry into facts. But it was also clear that the ministers had entered rashly upon a course which pledged them to the principles of church extension; and this, in a case of eminently dubious claims; and that Lord Melbourne's speech of this night showed a considerable change and enlargement of view, which came too late.

This question here merged into the yet more essential one which, in a few years, determined the fate of the Scotch Church—the question of patronage. When we arrive at the date of that story, more will be seen of the disastrous effects of the unconsciousness of statesmen of the vital importance of church conflicts, when the principles of religious liberty are in question. If the case is intricate—as in this instance of the patronage question—it may be said that statesmen cannot be expected to enter into all its niceties. If so, it is a misfortune that the determination rests with them; for it is precisely upon the niceties of a question of principle that the decision ought to depend. Meantime, as early as June 1835, Lord J. Russell committed a grave mistake which showed how little he understood of what was involved in the question of patronage.

In May, the landowners of East Kilbride agreed to petition government to allow a trial of candidates for their pulpit. On the 14th, and again on the 21st, Lord J. Russell promised to consult the wishes of the petitioners.

On the 6th of June, it appeared that the candidates were six; and this, as was immediately notified to Lord J. Russell, called for an interval of six Sundays before the choice was made. But on the 16th, the appointment of one of the candidates was gazetted; and it had been previously known in Glasgow. The remark of the reforming journal which relates the fact is: 'Lord John, like most Englishmen, is ignorant of the peculiar position of the Scottish Church, and the feelings of Scotchmen towards it.' The time was, however, approaching when the English, if they did not comprehend the church questions of Scotland, were impressively instructed as to the feelings of Scotchmen towards it.

CHAPTER VIII.

Agricultural Distress—Committee of Inquiry—Result—Finance—Duties—Budget—Distress—Joint-stock Banks—Committee of Inquiry—Acts—National Registration—Marriage—Births and Deaths—First Operation—Imprisonment for Debt—Counsel for Felons—Coroners' Powers—New Houses of Parliament—Admission of Ladies to Debates—Privilege of Parliament—Weakness of the Administration.

The great questions whose history has been detailed left little leisure to parliament for debates on subjects of more ordinary interest. The session of 1835 was declared at its close to be ingloriously remarkable for the small amount of business transacted; and during the next two, the topics which are usually brought forward every year, in the expectation that they will be amply debated, were either omitted, or dismissed with brief notice. The subject of agricultural distress is rarely absent from the records of any session; and we find it here, as usual. In May 1835, the Marquis of Chandos moved for a repeal of the taxes which bore upon the agricultural interest. Every one admitted the distress—the low or fluctuating prices of produce—the uncertainty of the farmer's gains while his expenses were fixed, and, under some heads, increased;

but the majority of the House agreed with Sir R. Peel, who doubted whether the best way of assisting the farmer was by reducing direct taxation; and unless this were certain, he thought it wrong to excite hopes which would probably be disappointed. The motion was therefore voted down by a large majority. At the beginning of the next session, the complaints continuing, Lord J. Russell moved for a committee of inquiry, declaring that the long-continued or permanent distress of any interest was a proper subject of investigation; but he guarded himself from being supposed to promise or to expect relief to the agriculturists from anything that could be done or proposed through such a committee. During its sitting, parliament was relieved from the discussion of the subjects usually introduced as the causes of agricultural distress—the currency, local burdens, and the corn-laws. Mr. Cayley had rest from the labour of showing how it was the bill of 1819 which occasioned agricultural distress, and how all would be right if we resorted to 'a silver standard, or conjoined standard of silver and gold.' The House would not agree to this the year before; and now the committee would preclude its being brought forward again. The Marquis of Chandos would be spared his annual speech on the burdens on land; and the enemies of the corn-laws could not do better than trust the cause of free-trade to the evidence brought before the committee. The continued pressure of agricultural distress was a stronger argument in favour of a repeal of the corn-laws than any which could be uttered by the voice of any man; and it was certain to be corroborated by all the evidence which the committee could call for. The result was remarkable. The committee 'ended in nothing,' as the disappointed said; that is, it presented the evidence, without any report whatever. A report had been prepared; and it was discussed at a meeting of twenty-five of the committee, eighteen of whom called themselves emphatically the farmers' friends. These eighteen objected altogether to the report, as certain to injure the cause of the suffering party, and insisted upon its suppression. They could not have done better for the objects of the free-traders. The reasons for their venturing thus to

disappoint the expectations of the landed interest were looked for in the evidence, and easily found. The labourer was one part, and the largest, of the agricultural interest; and he was found to be in a state no worse than formerly, but considerably better than of late years. The other two classes, less numerous, united, than that of the labourers, were shown to be victims, not of the pressure of local burdens, but of fluctuations in the price of produce, which kept the farmer in perpetual uncertainty about his profits, and the landowner about his rents. The report would have stated these results; but its suppression, and the publication of the evidence on which it was founded, answered every purpose equally well. Familiar and wearisome as the subject is, it becomes more, instead of less, necessary to record complaints of agricultural distress as every year brings us nearer to the great settlement of the principle of agricultural commerce, that it may be clear how that settlement was both occasioned and justified by the sufferings of the landed interest, who might, according to their own annual complaints, gain by a change of system, but could hardly lose.

The cry for the reduction of taxation was not on behalf of the agriculturists alone. Every year it was demanded; and every year the chancellor of the exchequer replied that government was reducing taxation as fast as it could, without needing the intervention of parliamentary committees, or other stimulus or assistance. In 1835, there was no surplus, though considerable evidence of prosperity. The great fires in London and Dublin—the destruction of the houses of parliament, and injury to the Dublin custom-house—occasioned unforeseen expense; and there were other unexpected charges; but the aspect of affairs was favourable enough to justify the reduction or repeal of a few small taxes; namely, the duty on flint-glass, now reduced from 6*d.* to 2*d.* per lb.; the reduction of the duty on spirit-licences, within a certain limit; and the repeal of the duty on awards in Ireland, whereby inducement might be offered to the poorer classes to settle their disputes in a cheaper manner than by going to law. It was found necessary to make an alteration in the tea-duty, as well as in that on spirit-licences. Lord Althorp's methods

rarely worked well; and in this case it was found necessary very soon to alter the tax on tea. Before the China trade was thrown open, there was a scale of *ad valorem* tea-duties, charged according to the prices given at the sales at the India House. When teas might be sold in any shop, government fixed three rates of duty, corresponding with the qualities of teas, in the hope of thus subjecting the purchasers of low-priced teas to a low duty. Besides the temptation to fraud, and the infinite trouble sure to be caused by this arrangement, it was soon found that the qualities of teas are not often distinct and distinguishable enough to afford an unquestionable basis for separate taxation. Teas of different value paid the same duty, and teas of the same value paid a different duty; the custom-house officers had in their hands, not only an irksome task, but a greater power of oppression than any tax could justify. The House agreed to the proposal of government; and it was resolved that, from the 31st of July 1836, the discriminatory duty should cease, and be succeeded by one of 2*s.* 1*d.* on all teas for home consumption.

In 1835, an effort was made by Mr. Bulwer to obtain a repeal of the stamp-duty on newspapers. The chancellor of the exchequer did not defend the tax, which he admitted to be bad in principle and policy; but he must satisfy himself with pledging his testimony against the tax, and wait for a further surplus before he could undertake to repeal it. This was received as a promise to repeal the duty the next year. Between two-thirds and three-fourths of the duty was in fact remitted the next year. The 4*d.* stamp with discount was exchanged for 1*d.* stamp without discount. The reason why the remission was not complete was that a postage rate must in that case have been imposed; and it was thought more convenient to all parties to retain a small stamp-duty. This was a remission of taxation truly honourable to government, and beneficial to the people. A vast quantity of trash was immediately driven out of the market, and its place supplied by good newspapers. The lowest order of readers will always prefer what is superior to what is inferior, in political and social literature, as in everything else, if both are made equally attainable; and it presently appeared that unstamped

newspapers, got up by adventurers in defiance of law—however faulty the law might be—had no chance with the least informed class of readers in the presence of more intelligent journals, now legally made cheap.

The report of the chancellor of the exchequer was prosperous this year—1836—for the last time for several years; for before the next session, the memorable seven years' distress of the manufacturing-classes had given tokens of approach which were not to be mistaken. In 1836, the surplus would have been two millions, but for the payments to the West India planters. As it was, there was a surplus of £662,000, destined in the first place to the reduction of the paper-duties, which were pernicious in many ways, and especially as affording incitement and occasion to extensive frauds. Writing-paper had been paying a duty of 25 per cent.; printing paper, from 50 to 60 per cent.; and coarse paper, from 70 to 200 per cent. There was now to be a general duty of 1½*d.* per lb. on all sorts; and, as all paper paid duty, the secondary tax on stained paper was remitted altogether. Lord Althorp had repealed the duty on the insurance of farming-stock; and it was now proposed to extend the repeal to the insurance-duty on farm-buildings. Some smaller taxes went also, as it was anticipated that there would be a large increase in the consumption of paper, and in the spread of newspapers so as to obviate any ultimate loss to the revenue from the repeal of their respective duties. In 1837, the surplus was less than £400,000; and the chancellor of the exchequer could only declare his own disappointment to be as great as other people's—show that his former reductions of duty had answered well—declare that the present adversity was owing to the commercial panic which had lately prevailed—and express his confident hope that the worst was past, and that he should have a more cheering story to tell next year.

There was something irritating in the constantly hopeful and satisfied tone of the chancellor of the exchequer, whom nothing could discourage or depress, so far as to make him evince, at any time, the solicitude which seemed naturally to belong to his position, in a season of adversity. His *poco-curanteism*, joined with Lord Melbourne's,

was too much for the patience of the suffering people during the terrible winter of 1836 and 1837. The harvest had not been a very good one; and in America it was so much worse, that there was a large demand for wheat from England, exactly at the time when the money relations of the two countries were in a fearful state. The potato crop had failed at home; and just when the cold of a severe winter was setting in, there was a complication of distresses which it might appal any minister to face. By the extraordinary action of the American president, General Jackson, upon the banks, there was a drain for gold from every country that could send away; and the stock in the Bank of England was lower than at any time since the passing of the bill of 1819, except during the worst of the crisis of 1825. The prices of all articles but food were so low that manufactures seemed likely to stop for the winter; while, from the insufficient supply of food, and the drain from abroad for what there was, the price of corn and other provisions was rising from week to week. When the bank took fright, and 'put on the screw,' the dismay was extreme, and nothing better was looked for than such a winter as that of ten years before.

During the preceding prosperity—during the three years of fine seasons, abundant harvests at home, and increased production of food in Ireland—speculation had revived and shown itself especially in the direction of banking. Now the time had come for looking into the matter—now, when the Bank of England had restricted her issues, and made the pain or numbness of the operation felt through every nerve of the commercial and manufacturing body of the nation. In the first seven years from the institution of joint-stock banking, thirty-four joint-stock banks were established. Nearly the same number rose up in the three following years, extending to the end of 1835. The average thus was, for the ten years, three new banks per annum. But in 1836, there were forty-two new ones set up, with branches which increased the number to nearly 200. During that year, the issues of joint-stock banks had increased nearly a million and a half. The branches in connection with the joint-stock banks existing in 1836 were 670 in number; and the number of partners was upwards

of 37,000. Of these banks, more than three-fourths issued their own notes; and those that issued the notes of the Bank of England, in exchange for facilities in the way of discounts, were bound not to send up less than a certain amount of bills for discount, so that the local issues were thus put by the bank out of its own power of control. During the three years of fine harvests, the price of wheat had fallen from 55*s.* 5*d.* to 36*s.*; the abundance of food more than compensated to the working-classes for the rising prices of other articles; and their condition was one of unusual prosperity. During the latter part of this period, the Bank of England increased its issues by a million, and other banks—in England, Wales, and Ireland—by three millions; and speculation became almost as mad as it had been ten years before. It was not till April 1836 that the bank began to contract its issues; and the drain of gold had already set in so as to induce the directors to raise the rate of interest on discount to 4½ per cent. in July and 5 in August. The joint-stock banks did not take the hint, as had been hoped, but actually increased their issues above 50 per cent. in the course of the year, during the greater part of which the bank had been striving to stop the drain of gold which had reduced the stock of bullion to five millions. The panic which must come was foreseen by men of business through the summer. Its first manifestation was the failure of a great joint-stock bank in Ireland—the Agricultural and Commercial—which, with its thirty branches, came to a stop in November. A general run upon joint-stock banks had begun, and in the north of England there seemed reason to fear a repetition of the miseries of 1826. To avoid this, and in fear for its own low stock of bullion, the Bank of England gave ample and rapid assistance—saving first the great Manchester Joint-stock Bank—'the Northern and Central,' and its forty branches—and in that, and by subsequent efforts, many others. An untoward accident presently afterwards increased the public distrust in the state of commercial affairs. When the Bank of England raised the rate of interest on discounts, and had to lend to money-dealers who employed the loans in the discount of goods bills, there was much surprise at the quantity of American paper that

came in, disclosing the existence of an unsound system of credits carried on by six houses in London and one in Liverpool, which made advances on American account to an amount of not less than fifteen or sixteen millions at one time, while the means of meeting their liabilities did not altogether amount to so much as one-sixth of the whole. The bank directors sent orders to their agent at Liverpool to refuse the paper of certain American houses. By some strange indiscretion the names of these firms got abroad. Though they fell into immediate discredit, these firms contrived to struggle on till the next March, when three of them, whose outstanding acceptances amounted to five millions and a half, suspended payment. The danger now was that other American houses must stop, whose liabilities, added to those just mentioned, would have amounted to nearly twelve millions. To avert so fatal a shock, the bank sustained the three great houses till they had considerably lessened the amount of their liabilities. But such transactions did not confirm public confidence in England, and occasioned a further embarrassing reaction from America, where the consequence was nothing less than the knocking up of all the banks which had escaped the operations of President Jackson.

Amidst such a state of affairs it was not to be wondered at that renewed parliamentary inquiry into the principles and practice of banking was desired. A committee of inquiry into the operation of joint-stock banks had sat, with Mr. Clay as chairman in the session of 1836, and had resolved at the close to present such evidence as had come before them, without declaring any doctrine or recommendation till the subject should have been prosecuted further. The royal speech of the 31st of January 1837 emphatically recommended the subject to the earnest attention of the House of Commons, declaring that, while the best security against the mismanagement of banking must always be found in the integrity and ability of the managers, no legislative regulation should be omitted which can confirm the security.

On the 6th of February, the chancellor of the exchequer moved for the renewal of the late committee; to which the majority of the House eagerly assented. In the course of

the debate, there seemed to be an almost universal agreement to express confidence in joint-stock banks, to praise their management under late difficulties, and to blame the bank for various faults of conduct. The committee, however, found occasion to recommend large alterations in the arrangements of joint-stock banks, and these were embodied in an act which became law on the 17th of July 1837. By this act, shareholders became liable for only the amount of their shares; and there could no longer be an unrestricted nominal capital, or an imperfect registration of the names of shareholders. A further regulation was carried out in 1844, by an act which may be referred to here, as concluding the subject. By this act, every new company is required to present a petition to the queen in council, signed by at least seven of the shareholders, praying for a patent of institution, and offering all the necessary details of the persons, the capital, the method of management, the locality proposed, and so on. The petition is then examined by the Board of Trade, and certified to be in compliance with the law. The deed of partnership is superintended by the Board of Trade. An unauthorised partner can now no longer bind the rest of the partners to any act; but only an authorised director. Joint-stock banks have now the right of suing and being sued. The difficulties and dangers of banking are not removed by these acts; nor can be by any means whatever till the intricate subject of currency—which includes many others—is absolutely understood by a few, and comparatively well by all parties immediately concerned. Meantime, we see in the records of the time a melancholy picture of popular ignorance extending to high places, while the consequent misery spread down to the lowest. One member of parliament thought that a silver standard would set all right; another declared, in allusion to the cheerfulness of the chancellor of the exchequer, that ministers were fiddling while the state was burning; that the distress of 1825–6 was not a millionth part of what existed at present; and that a paper-currency, regulated by the demand, was the only cure: one was for requiring incessant and minute returns from every banking establishment, for the sake of control by the Bank of England

or the government; and another was opposed to all inquiry whatever till the 'infant' joint-stock banks could show what they could do; some were for making the Bank of England the only bank of issue; others were for allowing no issues but by a national bank, which should be responsible to the crown and to parliament; and others, again, were for perfect free-trade in money. Amidst these differences, men might be advancing towards knowledge; and parliament did something in improving the securities of joint-stock banks; but there was something melancholy and alarming in the sense and evidence of general ignorance which was pressed upon the thoughtful by the incidents of the time. It was within the period mentioned above, that a currency discussion took place at the Political Economy Club, at which three cabinet ministers attended as hearers, and where three or more chiefs of the science propounded their respective doctrines. The matter was gone into with all possible ability, earnestness, and temper; and no one complained of want of opportunity to state his doctrine fully. No one of these chiefs converted another; only one, if any, gave a general impression of being fully master of his subject; and no one could be declared to have settled the mind of any hearer. The three cabinet ministers listened in earnest silence, and committed themselves to no opinion. It is probable that they thought, like other hearers, that the subject, certainly fathomable, is as yet as far from being fathomed as any on which society is under the fate of proceeding from day to day, without being able to pause for wisdom to choose a path which might guide her clear of some terrible abyss ahead, instead of straight into it. We now know, only too feelingly, that the monetary crisis of 1836–7 was not to be the last.

One of the most useful and beneficial acts of legislation of this reign was that which gave the nation a registration of births, marriages, and deaths; and the year 1836 was that which introduced it. In noting the year of its origin, the mind is carried on to contemplate the spread of its consequences, which may indeed be fairly considered incalculable. The most obvious, though the lowest, consideration is the security of property given by the existence of an authentic and accessible record of the family events

which govern the transmission of real property. Another consideration, deeply felt by a large section of the people, was the removal of a tacit disgrace and disability from the Dissenters; a disgrace and disability never designed, but growing out of the fact that whatever registration existed was ecclesiastical and not civil. Not births, but baptisms, were, up to this time, registered; no marriages but those which took place at the church of the Establishment, from which Quakers and Jews were therefore excluded; no deaths but of persons who were buried by the clergy of the Establishment. Again, here was a means of exploration into the whole of society, which might answer many beneficent purposes, while it had nothing in it obtrusive or despotic. The numbers of the people would be known; their proportion to the means of education; their worldly condition, as indicated by the proportion of marriages; their sanitary condition, as indicated by the proportion of mortality, and the nature of the maladies which carried them off; and, finally, here would be, always at hand, a vast body of statistical facts, out of which social reforms might be constructed, according to the speculations of the most thoughtful, and perhaps beyond the dreams of the most imaginative. In old times, the registration, being exclusively ecclesiastical, was one of the duties appointed expressly to the clergyman, on his entrance into his function; but it was used for civil purposes, which caused it to be disliked, and consequently evaded, where possible. It was used for taxing purposes, as in the Act of 6 and 7 William III., c. 6, when duties were levied 'on births, marriages, and burials, and upon bachelors and widowers, for the term of five years, for carrying on the war against France with vigour.' The most recent legislation upon the subject had chiefly provided for the security of the records—ordaining that the books should be made of parchment or strong paper, and kept in dry and well-painted iron chests. No conception of the importance of such a measure as a complete civil registration of the life, death, and domestic condition of the whole people seems to have entered the mind of the nation till our own century; and that century will hereafter be regarded as honourable in which it was done.

The improvement in the marriage law connected with this measure has been specified before. Sir R. Peel introduced the sound principle of rendering marriage a civil contract, only so far obligatory by law, because the civil contract is all that the state has to do with; and the religious celebration is a matter of private conscience altogether. From the time of the passage of this act, the business lay, as far as the state was concerned, between the registrar and the parties intending to marry. The marriage might take place at the office of the superintendent-registrar, or at any church or chapel registered for the purpose, without publication of banns, and in virtue of the registrar's certificate that the provisions of the law had been complied with—the registrar being present, and the certificate being delivered to the officiating clergyman, or the registering officer in any dissenting chapel or synagogue. If the parties are married at the superintendent-registrar's office, that officer must be present, and another registrar and two witnesses; the hours and open doors must be the same as in other cases, and also the declarations as to the absence of legal impediment. In the place of the former publication of banns, there was now to be a sufficient previous residence and length of notice—the publication of banns being henceforth confined to the case of members of the Establishment. By this act, the Dissenters obtained a relief which it will hereafter be astonishing that they could have waited for so long; and the state began to practise the virtuous prudence of making marriage as accessible as it at present knew how, and consonant to the principles and feelings of the conscientious of every way of thinking.

This marriage business occupied one of the two bills brought forward by Lord John Russell on the 12th of February. The other provided for the registration of births and deaths. The guardians of the poor were to divide the parishes into districts which should be supplied with a sufficiency of registrars. The occupiers of houses were encouraged to give notice, within a certain time, of every birth and death that happened therein, with such particulars as the officers were authorised to ask. A fee on registration must be paid, after the lapse of the shortest

term specified; and a heavier fee after further delay. Births and deaths happening at sea were to be registered by the captain of the vessel. Those who gave information of deaths were encouraged to present a declaration of the cause of death, in the handwriting of the attendant medical man. The registers were to be transmitted to London, to be kept in a central office, where access might be had to them, on payment of a small fee. It may be seen at a glance what a broad ground for sanitary improvement was afforded by this measure; how immediately the prevalence of certain diseases in particular localities must be made apparent; and how easy it must become in time to ascertain the most important conditions of life and health from a body of facts so large and so unquestionable as is afforded by a general register.

In the first year the number of deaths registered amounted almost exactly to that which Mr. Finlaison, the actuary, previously said it ought to be. The marriages registered were fewer than could have taken place; and the births fewer still. The prejudices against the registration of births have been giving way ever since, and the returns are less unsatisfactory every year; but they are still defective, the births unregistered certainly amounting to some thousands every year. This is likely to be the last portion of the scheme which will work as it ought. By the end of 1838, the number of registrars amounted to about 2200; nearly half of whom were officers in poor-law unions. Of these, above 400 registered marriages, as well as births and deaths; and 400 more registered marriages only. The superintendent-registrars were about 600. The total expense was estimated by the ministers, when Lord John Russell introduced the measure, at about £80,000 per annum; and surely he was right in thinking that the money could not be better spent. This great institution, as it may be called, was one result of the reform of the poor-law; and if from it should arise a thoroughly effective scheme of sanitary administration, we may see in the new poor-law a cure for other than 'the great political gangrene of England.'

In the session of 1835, a bill to abolish imprisonment for debt had passed the Commons, but had reached the

peers too late for any chance of becoming law that year. In 1836 the lord chancellor introduced a similar measure on the 30th of June; but, before the middle of July, when the vote for the second reading was to be taken, the Duke of Wellington settled, for himself and the House, that it was too late to proceed with a matter of such importance; and though the premier thought there was plenty of time, the bill was dropped. Some success was now, at last, obtained by those who had, for several sessions, attempted to obtain the benefit of counsel for prisoners on trial for felony. Twice had a bill to this effect passed the Commons and been obstructed or dropped in the Lords; but now the criminal law commissioners had unanimously recommended that prisoners charged with felony should be allowed the advantage of counsel to address the jury in their defence; and the proposal came before parliament with a new sanction. The marvel of the case now is that there could have been any doubt about the matter; but there were still persons who were misled by the saying that the judge was the prisoner's counsel—not considering how much there might be in the case which could never come to the knowledge of the judge. Lawyers of all politics said this; some knew cases where innocent men had been sacrificed for want of legal aid; and all seemed to approve the principle of the bill, while a few, as Lord Lyndhurst, objected to certain of the details. In treason trials, at one end of the scale of crime, and in trials for misdemeanour, at the other, prisoners had the benefit of counsel, but not in the intermediate range. No one among the peers disputed the absurdity of this; and in committee, only one amendment was made to which the Commons did not at once agree. But that amendment was of great consequence; and it seemed at one time likely to throw out the bill for that year. The bill gave the prisoner the last word. His counsel was to reply to the address for the prosecution, after the evidence was done with. Lord Abinger declared that he would oppose the bill if this was in all cases allowed. The lord chancellor defended the provision, but was outvoted. The Commons were disturbed, and requested a conference: the Lords would not yield their amendments; and, sooner than lose the bill altogether,

Mr. Ewart, who brought it in, took what he could get, announcing that he should try for the rest another year.

A new statute was passed this session which repealed the obligation to execute murderers the next day but one after conviction, unless the day should happen to be Sunday. The same discretion was now left as to the day of execution, as in other cases of capital conviction. The powers of coroners were enlarged, in the same session, by means of a provision for paying the expenses of medical witnesses, and enabling the coroner to call for additional medical evidence, when required.

An interesting item in the business of parliament, since the great fire, had been the consideration how to provide a new house for the great council of the nation to meet and work in. On request from parliament, a royal commission had been appointed in 1835, to receive plans by open competition for the rebuilding of the houses. Out of more than ninety plans, four had been selected for further examination; and to choose among these was the business of the renewed committee of 1836. A debate was raised by Mr. Hume as to whether the site should not be exchanged for a spot more open and elevated—as, perhaps, St. James's Palace and Marlborough House; but, besides that certain conveniences were connected with the old site, much property had been bought, and many houses pulled down, for the purpose of rebuilding on the same spot.

The opinion of the committees of both Houses as to the choice of plan and architect, was made apparent in March by their proposal of an address to the king, to petition him to institute inquiries as to the probable expense of executing the plan of Mr. Barry. It was considered a great day for art in England when such a work as this was thrown open to competition. Here was no despotism of rank or fame, in king or architect, to settle a matter in which the nation should have a share through its representatives; but, while the tribunal was as good a one as could have been found to meet all the needs of the case, its nature was a sort of invitation to the people to look upon the enterprise as business of their own, and learn from it, as we all do from enterprises of our own. It was worth the inconvenience and loss from the fire to give the nation

such an exercise in art and the love of it as the erection of the palace of parliament. The cost has far exceeded expectation, and is still heavy; and it has occurred during a long period of distress; but it is hard to say how the money could have been better spent than on an object so noble, so truly expedient, so plainly extending its benefits into a far future, as the erection of a building which will be to a future age what our old abbeys and cathedrals are to us now. Mr. Barry's plan appears to have put all others out of sight at once—admirable as some of them were declared to be. One of its excellences was that there was a largeness and unity about its exterior plan which admitted of great modifications, according to circumstances and experience, of interior arrangements; but this advantage was not regarded as a merit by disappointed competitors and their advocates, but rather as a ground of complaint about changes and improvements, and departure from original proposals. If it required the courage of a hero to offer such a plan to a body so notoriously utilitarian as the British House of Commons; it required further the patience of a saint to endure being 'hunted and pursued' as Mr. Barry was from the moment of the preference of the committees being avowed, and with more or less intermission through succeeding years. But a man who works for ten thousand generations cannot expect perfect sympathy from the existing one. He ought to be satisfied with so much as enables him to do his work; and Mr. Barry has had much more than this. He might be satisfied with looking forward to future centuries, when men of an advanced order of civilisation will pass through his imposing corridors and pictured halls, and pause before his magnificent tower, and swell with admiration, without any more dreaming of criticism than we do in pacing a cathedral aisle. The criticism appears to be of a more temporary character even than usual in this case; the most vehement being connected with the process of competition—presently done with—and much of the rest being about the proportions of unfinished work. All this will die away in a few years; and then the general appreciation of the achievement will begin. Meantime, the architect has been well sustained by admiration and sympathy.

The principle of competition is admitted also in regard to the sculpture and paintings to be deposited within. The present will be ever regarded as a memorable period for British sculptors and painters, as well as architects. They have been invited to open competition, so conducted as that every artist can show, before worthy judges, how far he is capable of conceiving and presenting the ideas and facts of the destiny and story of his nation. If there is genius among us undeveloped, it will be brought out; and that which has already made itself known cannot but be animated by such an incitement. We may hope to see, in the new houses of parliament, the mind of our time stamped for the contemplation of the future, in the form of a history of the past; and if this is not done, it must be because we are not able to do it; for the opportunity lies open. Niches and pedestals are waiting for statues, and panels for paintings; and all our artists are invited to come and try who is most worthy to supply both. If there are men to do it, it will be done; and that the case is such, is a noble feature of the time. A beginning of the great enterprise was made in 1837, by the formation of the embankment along the river-side. It was three years more before anything of the character of the work could show itself; and then, when the east end appeared to the height of the first floor, every one was astonished to find how far the apparition transcended all expectation of it that could be caused by descriptions and drawings.

In connection with this building, an innovation on the proceedings of parliament was proposed in two successive sessions, and discussed at more length, and in a less creditable tone, than could have been expected. In July 1835, it was proposed in the House of Commons that accommodation should be provided in the new edifice for the presence of women at the debates. The proposal was made in a spirit and in language which went far to place every sensible woman on the same side of the question with Lord J. Russell, when he declared his disinclination to debate the matter, and his intention to oppose the motion. Lord J. Russell was outvoted, however, and a committee was appointed to consider the subject. The whole proceeding had much the air of an ill-bred joke—

the speech of the mover, the ostentatious eagerness to second it, the coarse mirth, and the large majority. On the next occasion, May 3, 1836, matters were worse—the speeches more indecent, the mirth more flippant and unmanly, the majority larger in proportion. It seemed likely that the women of England might indeed be invited to be present at the deliberations of legislators whose method of invitation was an insult in itself, and who professed to wish for the presence of ladies, among other reasons, as a check upon intoxication and indecency of language. But the affair was happily put an end to by means chiefly of a serious and sensible reply from the speaker, when asked for his opinion on occasion of a grant for a ladies' gallery being proposed. The grant was refused by a majority of 42 against 28. As for the merits of the question, when considered seriously, there was little difference of opinion. Those who advocated the admission of women in the gallery did not pretend to be thinking of the improvement of the women's knowledge, and, the cultivation of their interest in subjects which concern every member of society—those who are waiting for political participation, as well as those who have it. Every one knew that serious objects like these are best accomplished at home, as the speeches of legislators are certainly much better in the newspapers than as they are spoken. If the proposition of a ladies' gallery had been carried, the place would have been found to be occupied almost exclusively by giddy and frivolous women, fond of novelty, and with plenty of time to lose; a nuisance to the legislature, and a serious disadvantage to the wiser of their own sex—inasmuch as these triflers would be understood, from their very presence, to be representatives of the Englishwomen who take an interest in politics; while in reality, the latter class would be precisely those who would be reading and thinking at home. Whenever the time shall arrive when the legal position of woman in England comes fairly under the eye of the legislature—a position so injurious as to extract from Lord Brougham the confession, in 1838, that the whole of the law was so atrocious as regards woman, that there is nothing to be done but to leave it alone, and keep

it out of sight as long as possible—it would be a serious disadvantage to Englishwomen to be judged of, as they inevitably would be, by such a sample as would have attended the debates on such an invitation as that of Mr. Grantley Berkeley and Mr. Villiers. As it was, the women of England gained something—in the way of warning how far they were from being respected by those who professed most regard for their political improvement; and the House of Commons lost much in the way of character for sense and refinement. It had often exposed itself by the boyish passion and pot-house manners which had occasioned confusion within its walls; but it now outbid all former disgraces, and excited a disgust which was not likely to be forgotten. The simple-minded now knew something of the way in which some gentry talk when they get together—like to like. The simple-minded were shocked; but they were glad to know the truth, and resolved to bear it in mind.

Every one admits, as a general declaration, that no subject can be more important, in the deliberations of parliament, than the defence of its own privileges; yet the whole nation dislikes the subject, and is too apt to despise it. A troublesome and protracted and very serious conflict about the privileges of the Commons began in 1837. On the 6th of February, a petition was presented from Messrs. Hansard, the printers to the House, who stated that, in course of the ordinary authorised sale of parliamentary reports and papers to the public, a prison report had been sold, in which was contained a statement given in evidence, that certain prisoners were found reading obscene works, issued by a certain publisher, whose name was given—J. J. Stockdale; that Stockdale had brought an action for libel against Messrs Hansard in the Court of King's Bench, laying his damages at £20,000; that Messrs. Hansard had pleaded in justification the sanction and authority of the House of Commons; that the Court of King's Bench had ordered the plea to be struck off the record; and that Messrs. Hansard prayed the protection of the House.

The privilege of parliament was not involved in the act of disallowing the Hansards' plea, the disallowance

being merely on the ground that the plea was unnecessary for technical reasons; and, on this opening occasion, no one dreamed that the privilege of parliament was in question at all. It was on occasion of the trial, the next day, that the controversy was raised. It was raised by Chief-justice Denman, who said that he was not aware that the authority of the House of Commons could justify the publication of a libel. In his charge to the jury, he repeated his opinion with strong emphasis; and the jury accordingly found, that though the book referred to was obscene and disgusting, the defendants were guilty of libel on the publisher. Within a week the House took up the matter, and appointed a committee to investigate the question of privilege. On the 30th of May, Lord Howick moved resolutions framed on the report of the committee, affirming that the House had full power to publish what it chose; that to bring the privileges of parliament into discussion before any tribunal but parliament itself, is a high breach of privilege; and that for any court or tribunal to assume to decide on the privileges of parliament, otherwise than as carrying out the decisions of either House thereon, is contrary to the law of parliament, and a breach and contempt of its privileges. Sir R. Peel supported these resolutions, against a set, of a contrary purport, proposed by Sir R. Inglis; and those supported by the two parliamentary leaders were carried by a majority of 90 in a House of 162.

Here was the Court of King's Bench placed in direct and irreconcilable opposition to the House of Commons; Lord Chief-justice Denman to the assembled representatives of the nation. It was no trifle, such a quarrel as this; and its issue was awaited with great anxiety by all who understood its bearings.

There is nothing more to be said of the action of parliament during the reign. The Whig ministers were not men of business. They conveyed the impression of doubt about the quality and practicability of their own measures; and this was, in fact, inviting the obstruction or demolition of those measures. Every session became, to the sensations of those concerned in it, more and more like a troubled dream, wherein the sufferer is for ever struggling to get on, and for ever in vain. By this time, the minis-

ters themselves had arrived at complaining that they could not carry their measures; and this provoked an inquiry, by no means spoken *sotto voce*, whether, in that case, they were fit for the very office whose business is to pass measures. They were obliged to endure, on occasion of the close of the reign, a speech of scornful reproach from Lord Lyndhurst, which they could not repel with answering scorn, because the Houses and the country knew that the taunts, though severely expressed, were mainly true. After showing that, at the end of a session of five months, only two measures of original importance had been passed, while seventy-five public bills were depending in the Commons, he declared: 'Never was the state of business in the other House of parliament in the situation in which it was at present; never did a government so neglect so important a part of its duty—that which it had to discharge in parliament—as the government had done during the last five months. The noble viscount and his colleagues were utterly powerless. They were powerless alike in that and in the other House; they were utterly inefficient and incompetent as servants to the crown; and he must add also, they were equally powerless, incapable, and inefficient as regarded the people.' . . . He could only say that almost every feasible and reasonable man had but one opinion; but one idea was entertained regarding their conduct. It elicited the pity of their friends, and excited the scorn and derision of the enemies of their country. He gave them a picture of the present—he had also given them a picture of the past. What, then, were their hopes for the future?'

There is no need to accept the vaticinations of an enemy as to the future of the Whig ministry, as events will presently show us what it was. As for Lord Lyndhurst's pictures of the past and present, they were hailed by some, excited a smile in others, and were openly resented by very few. They were too nearly true to be strongly impugned. The premier protested vaguely against them, and went home placidly conscious that he was no nearer going out of office for anything that Lord Lyndhurst could say. A new period, affording fresh chances, was now setting in, during which they might show what they

could do. The premier might now have less leisure and licence than hitherto for blowing feathers, and nursing sofa-cushions, and serenely swearing in the face of deputations; but he was entering on a new term of power, and was safe for the present—whatever sarcastic enemies, and wearied friends, and the indignant people might say about the incapacity of the Melbourne ministry to carry on the business of the country.

CHAPTER IX.

Illness of the King—His Death—Accession of Queen Victoria—Severance of Hanover from England—The Council—William IV.—His Funeral—Queen Victoria—Queen proclaimed—Continuance of the Melbourne Ministry.

THE history of our Whig administrations is almost made up of obstruction on the part of their adversaries, and powerlessness on their own; but never were the Whig rulers reduced to more desperate straits than in the spring of 1837. They were supposed to have staked their existence on carrying their measures for Ireland; but they could not carry them. In the House of Lords the Tories cried out that the country was without a government; and the Radical members in the other House repeated the cry. The ministers were believed to desire earnestly the dissolution of the parliament formed during the short Peel administration; but the king would not hear of it. The king was believed to desire earnestly the resignation of the ministers; but the ministers did not appear to think of giving up. It was a state of things which could not endure long. When the change came, it was not exactly in the way that had been looked for.

The king's health had been better for the seven years since his accession than for a long previous period; and he enjoyed a remarkable exemption from the annual attack of hay-fever—as it is called—which had before regularly come on in June. At the beginning of 1837,

his family had observed that his strength was not what it had been; but he was upwards of seventy, and some decline might be looked for. When May came in, he appeared to be aging rapidly. On the 17th, he was seated at the levee, for the first time, and looked worn and feeble. On returning to Windsor, he had difficulty in mounting the stairs, and sat down on the first sofa. He held a drawing-room the next day, was again seated, and observed to look still worse; but he was less fatigued in the evening, and was in high spirits the next day—which was the anniversary of the battle of La Hogue. He talked a great deal about our naval warfare, and was carried away by the favourite subject of our victories at sea during the last century. He was stopped two or three times by difficulty of breathing, but went on again. The next morning, Saturday the 20th, he was much the worse for the exertion—could take no breakfast, and fell back fainting at lunch-time, and again at dinner. It was clear that evening that he could not go to town in the morning, to be present at the reopening of the Chapel Royal. It was ten at night before he gave it up, and he then left the drawing-room, never to enter it again. On Monday and Tuesday, he saw the ministers. On Wednesday there was a grand ball at St. James's, given by the king in celebration of the Princess Victoria attaining her majority. The ball was none of the merriest, from the absence of the king and queen; but the king sent tokens of his kindly sympathy. He presented the princess with a magnificent pianoforte, as his birthday-offering. He held a council on the Saturday; but was wheeled in a chair into the council-room, as he could no longer walk. When June arrived, he and those about him called his illness the old hay-fever. Whatever it was, it disappointed him of meeting the great parties he had invited for the Eton regatta on the 5th, and Ascot races afterwards. As he sat in his easy-chair, breathing with difficulty and sinking in weakness, the kind-hearted old man thought of various things which might add to the pleasure and comfort of the Eton lads, and others of his guests below; and many were the orders he gave. He insisted on the queen's going to Ascot on the race-day, that there might

be as little disappointment to the public as possible. She was not gone long; and when she returned, she observed a considerable change for the worse, in those two hours. The dinner in St. George's Hall the next day was dull and sad; but there was talk of the king being removed to Brighton in the morning, when perhaps the sea-air might revive him. When the morning came, he was too ill to stir; and the guests at the castle all went away after breakfast. An extraordinary stillness prevailed; and now, the king's danger was freely spoken of there and in London. The danger was supposed to be extreme; but he revived a little, and transacted some business with Sir Herbert Taylor the next day (the 9th), signing papers with much difficulty, but showing all necessary clearness of mind.

A bulletin was now first issued; but on the morrow, the king was so much better as to lead even his own attendants to think that the attack might be got over for the time. The improvement was, however, merely owing to medicines which temporarily relieved the breathing. During his severest suffering he was eminently patient, thankful for kind offices, and ever cheerful; and when he was relieved, it became evident how great had been the suffering which he had borne so quietly. His spirits rose, and he was full of thanksgiving. He was fully conscious of his danger throughout, and sincerely believing that, from the youth of the Princess Victoria, it was desirable that he should live some years longer, he prayed for life—not for his own sake, but for that of the country. He had prayers read very frequently; and they always revived him. On the 13th, he chose to see the Hanoverian minister on business; and on the 14th, the Duke of Cumberland—he and they, no doubt, being fully aware that the connection between the kingdoms of Hanover and England was hourly dissolving with his failing breath. Possibly, his desire to live ten years longer for the public good might have as much reference to Hanover as to Great Britain. For a few days more he fluctuated between life and death—now appearing to be breathing his last, and then signing a paper or two as he could rally his strength for the effort. His last act of sove-

reignty was signing the pardon of a condemned criminal. On the Sunday, he received the sacrament from the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury; and he appeared to derive so much solace from the mere presence of the primate, though unable to speak or to listen much, that the archbishop remained in the room till late into the night. The anniversary of Waterloo was always a great day with the king. The Duke of Wellington would not have held his usual banquet without complete assurance of the queen's wishes; but the good old king's thoughtfulness settled the matter the day before. He sent a message to the duke, to desire that the dinner might take place as usual, and to wish the host and guests a pleasant day. On the 19th, he saw all his children, and let them understand how fully aware he was that his death was just at hand. His last distinct and deliberate words appear to have been those which he addressed to the primate at the moment of their final parting: 'Believe me, I am a religious man.' He sank during the night, and died soon after two in the morning.

And then took place that immediate opposite action—that sudden revulsion of feeling—which the demise of royalty seems to necessitate, but which can never, under any circumstances, fail to be painful to every reflective person. Three carriages instantly drove up; and into those carriages went the primate, the Earl of Albemarle, and Sir Henry Halford, the royal physician. It was not five o'clock when they arrived at Kensington Palace. The doors were thrown open before them; in the morning sunshine stood the young queen and her mother, expecting the news, and ready for that day's impressive business—that birth to regality which, like the natural birth, can take place but once. Having delivered their news, the messengers proceeded to London, to wake up the government and the nation with tidings of the accession of their queen.

How widely were those tidings to extend? In a few hours they would spread in all directions to the sea: in a few days the Irish on their wild western coast, and the fishermen in the straits of the Orkneys, would be wondering how the young girl looked, and what she said when

told that she held the highest rank and the largest power on earth. 'In a few weeks, her subjects in the furthest Canadian provinces of her dominions would be assembling in the clearings of the forest under the summer night, or in the broad moonlight on the prairie, to ask if any one knew how the queen looked, and what she said when told the news. In a few months, turbaned messengers would be posting over the plains of India with the tidings; and, in shaded rooms, or under the shelter of tents, people would be speculating in like manner on the first feelings of a young queen, and soldiers would swear to themselves and to each other to fight and die in her service. Somewhat later, the solitary shepherd on the Australian plains would be musing on the news dropped by a passenger from the coast, and would, if an exile through poverty, or through crime, speculate on whether want or temptation could still oppress men so cruelly, now that a young queen, with a heart full of mercy, and power in her hands to do what she would, was to rule over a devoted people. It was an occasion which appealed to all hearts —a time when romantic expectation took possession of many who never knew romance before, and some who had believed that they should never know expectation again. What every one most wanted to learn was whether such exaltation and such hope were in the bosom of the young sovereign herself. Every movement, every tone, was eagerly and lovingly watched, on this extraordinary day of her life, and for some time afterwards; and on this day, her demeanour was all that could be wished.

By nine o'clock Lord Melbourne was at Kensington, was instantly admitted, and stayed half-an-hour, arranging for the assembling of the privy-council at eleven. Before noon came the lord mayor, with aldermen and other members of the corporation, to offer their duty on behalf of the city of London. Next arrived the King of Hanover —the Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, whose confidential agent had propounded to the loyal Orangemen the scheme of setting aside this young girl from her inheritance, because she was a girl and young. Lord Lyndhurst lent him his carriage, that no time might be lost; but he left the palace in his own state-coach—to start as soon as

possible, for his new kingdom, which had presently cause to mourn his arrival much more than England did his departure. There was no word of regret, even in newspapers, for the loss of a collateral kingdom which had formed a part of the British Empire for a century and a quarter; and if this arose in part from the indifference of the nation to the possession of profitless foreign territory, it must be ascribed in part also to the general satisfaction at the departure of the Duke of Cumberland, and at the sceptre having passed down to a new generation, from which more might be hoped than could ever have been derived from that which had given the nation much to bear in many ways since the opening of the century.

On the meeting of the princes, peers, and other councillors, they signed the oath of allegiance; and the first name on the list was that of 'Ernest,' King of Hanover. The queen caused them all to be sworn in members of her council, and then addressed them; after which they issued orders for the proclamation of her majesty. If the millions who longed to know how the young sovereign looked and felt could have heard her first address, it would have gone far to satisfy them. The address was, of course, prepared for her; but the manner and voice were her own, and they told much. Her manner was composed, modest, and dignified; her voice, firm and sweet; her reading, as usual, beautiful. She took the necessary oaths, and received the eager homage of the thronging nobility, without agitation or any kind of awkwardness. Her declaration contained an affectionate reference to the deceased king; an assertion of her attachment to the constitution of the country, and of her intention to rule in accordance with it; a grateful allusion to her mother's educational care of her; an avowal that under circumstances of such eminent responsibility as hers, she relied for support and guidance on Divine Providence; and a pledge that her life should be devoted to the happiness of her people. The ministers returned into her hands, and received again, the seals of their respective offices; the stamps in official use were ordered to be altered, and also the prayers of the Church which related to the royal family; the proclamation was prepared, and signed by

the privy-councillors; and the queen appointed the next day, Wednesday, for the ceremony. The first use of the great seal under the new reign was to authenticate the official proclamation, which was gazetted the same evening. During the whole morning, carriages were driving up rapidly, bringing visitors eager to offer their homage. What a day of whirl and fatigue for one in a position so lonely, at such tender years! How welcome must have been the night, and the quiet of her pillow, whatever might be the thoughts that rested upon it! The next morning, she appeared 'extremely pale and fatigued;' and no wonder; for she had passed through a day which could never be paralleled.

While the eagerness of homage and duty was thus suddenly gathering about the Kensington Palace, all was very still at Windsor. While the niece was receiving needful and most cordial assurances and offers of duty and support, the uncle was past all such needs. He had received all kind and dutiful offices with gratitude to the last; and now no one could do anything more for him, or receive his thanks. An attached wife, and daughters who were long in recovering from the grief of his loss, were at hand; and everything else was very still. Perhaps there might be, amidst the grief, a calmer sleep in the twilight of sovereignty here than in the bright dawn of it which was kindling in the other palace. And how different was the review of the life which had gone out from the anticipation of that which was just setting forth on a new career!

William Henry, the third son of George III., was born in August, 1765, and was therefore in his seventy-second year at the time of his death. He was destined for the sea, and became a midshipman at the age of fourteen. It is amusing to read, at this distance of time, of the distresses of the Admiralty at the insubordination to rules shown by Prince William, when he had risen high enough in the service to have a ship of his own to play his pranks with. When he was two or three and twenty, he twice left a foreign station without leave, thus setting an example which might ruin the discipline of the navy, if left unpunished. But how adequately to punish a prince

of the blood was the perplexity of the Admiralty. They ordered him to remain in harbour at Plymouth for as long a time as he had absented himself from his proper post, and then to return to his foreign station. This was not enough, but it was thought to be all that could be done in such a case; and the prince was withdrawn from the active exercise of his profession—from that time ascending through the gradations of naval rank as a mere matter of form. For twenty years, he continued thus to rise in naval rank, besides being made Duke of Clarence, with an allowance from parliament of £12,000 a year. During those twenty years, when he should have been active in his profession, he was living idly on shore, endeavouring after that enjoyment of domestic life for which he was eminently fitted, and from which our princes are so cruelly debarred by the operation of the Royal Marriage Act. The Duke of Clarence was the virtual husband of Mrs. Jordan, the most bewitching of actresses, and the queen of his heart during the best part of his life. They had ten children—five sons and five daughters. It is averred by those who understand the matter well, that the conduct of the Duke of Clarence in his unfortunate position was as good as the circumstances permitted; that he was as faithful and generous to Mrs. Jordan as some parties declared him to be otherwise. When men place themselves in such a position, they are bound to bear all its consequences without complaint; and it is understood that the Duke of Clarence endured much complaint and undeserved imputation with a patience and silence which were truly respectable. His children, the Fitzclarence family, were received in society with a freedom very unusual in England under such circumstances; and certainly, the strict English people appeared to be pleased rather than offended that the affectionate-hearted prince, to whom no real liberty of marriage had been left, should be surrounded in his old age by children who repaid his affection by exemplary duty and care. If this was a spectacle unfit—by the very mixture of goodness in it—for the court of England, the harm that there was in it was ascribed to the position of royalty, rather than the fault of the prince, while all believed that no reparation to the

purity of society could be effectually made by depriving the old man of the comfort of his children's society. Some of the family had occasion to find that forbearance could go even further than this; for they were left unhurt, except by universal censure, after their improper and foolish exertion of domestic influences against the Reform Bill and the Grey administration. The king's relatives were ready to be as good-humoured towards the Fitzclarences as the public were; and one of the early acts of the young queen was continuing to them the allowance of £500 a year each which had been granted to them by their father. Most people thought there was a wide difference between their accepting this sum from a father who chanced to be the sovereign, and from a sovereign who was under no domestic obligation towards them at all: but the Fitzclarences appeared not to perceive this; and when one of them soon after deliberately destroyed himself, he left a letter to the queen, requesting that this income might be continued to his children—a request of which it was thought right to take no notice. After the death of the Princess Charlotte, when many royal marriages took place, in competition for the succession, the Duke of Clarence married the eldest daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen. No issue from this marriage survived, though two infants were born only to die. For a few months, as we have seen, the Duke of Clarence bore the dignity of lord high-admiral; and he had previously performed a few holiday services on the sea by escorting and conveying royal visitors and adventurers across the Channel, and up and down in it. In politics, he had through life shown the same changeableness as in his conduct on the throne. On scarcely any subject was he firm but in his opposition to the abolition of slavery. He had not mind enough to grasp a great principle and hold to it; and, as he had not the obstinacy of his father and elder brothers, he was necessarily infirm of purpose, and as difficult to deal with in state matters as any of his family. What the difficulty amounted to, the history of the reform movement shows. In other respects, there was no comparison between the comfort of intercourse with him and with the two preceding sovereigns. He had not the stupid self-will and

self-sufficiency of George III., nor the vulgar and libertine selfishness of George IV. He was too harebrained to be relied on with regard to particular measures and opinions; but his benevolent concern for his people, his confiding courtesy to the ministers who were with him, whoever they might be, and his absence of self-regards, except where his timidity came into play, made him truly respectable and dear, in comparison with his predecessors. When his weakness was made conspicuous by incidents of the time, it seemed a pity that he should have been accidentally made a king; but then again some trait of benignity or patience or native humility would change the aspect of the case, and make it a subject of rejoicing, that virtues of that class were seen upon the throne, to convince such of the people as might well doubt it that a king may have a heart, and that some of its overflow might be for them.

The funeral took place at night on the 8th of July, the Duke of Sussex being chief mourner. For the last time, the royal crown of Hanover was placed beside the imperial crown on the coffin of a King of England. The wife who had so well performed her duties was present. Queen Adelaide, now queen-dowager, was in the royal closet. When the coffin had been lowered, dust thrown upon it, the blessing pronounced, and the rocket sent up from the portal which was to cause the lowering of the flag on the Round Tower, the royal widow left the place, and was followed by the mourners, as soon as the style and titles of the new sovereign had been recited. There were no January night-fogs here, to peril the lives of the mourners; but, instead, a heat so stifling as to make the crowd glad to disperse at the first possible moment. On the 13th, the queen, accompanied by her mother, left the old home at Kensington, to take possession of Buckingham Palace. It was the middle of the day; and crowds were waiting to cheer her on her passage to her regal home. She accepted the homage, but she was pale and grave; and there were none of her subjects who would not rather have seen this paleness and gravity than tokens of a gayer mood.

To some, it was not very far to look back to the May in

which she was born, and the month—so soon afterwards—when the newspapers told of the Duke of Kent's illness; how he had come in with wet boots, and, 'beguiled by the smiles of his infant princess,' had played with the baby instead of changing his boots till it was too late, and he had caught the cold of which he died. The course of years now seemed very short during which they had watched the growth and training of the princess; and here she was—out of her minority the other day, and now sovereign. What they had heard was favourable. If there had been omissions in her education, there had been no misguidance and no corruption. If the intellect had not been made the most of, the morals were pure, and the habits correct. From an early age, the princess had been seen walking in all weathers; sometimes in winter, with thick shoes and a warm cloak on a windy common. She kept early hours, and was active and scrupulously punctual—apologising for being half a minute late for an appointment, when that extraordinary circumstance happened once in her life. She had her allowance of money from an early age; her way of spending much of it was known at Tunbridge Wells, and other places of summer sojourn; but nobody ever heard of her being sixpence in debt for an hour. On the contrary, when her childish fancy was taken with some article which she wished to buy for a present to a cousin, she was seen to conclude at once that she must give it up, because she had not money enough till quarter-day to pay for it. And when it was put by for her—to her great satisfaction—it was as early as seven in the morning of quarter-day that she came down, on her donkey, to secure her purchase. These things are no trifles. The energy and conscientiousness brought out by such training are blessings to a whole people; and a multitude of her more elderly subjects, to this day, feel a sort of delighted surprise as every year goes by without any irritation on any hand about regal extravagance, without any whispered stories of loans to the sovereign, without any mournful tales of ruined tradesmen and exasperated creditors. At first, the queen was very rich—many persons thought, much too rich, for a maiden-queen, whose calls could as yet be nothing. But in the first year she paid her father's

heavy debts—debts contracted before she was born. Next, she paid her mother's debts—debts which she knew to be contracted on her account. We have seen what she did for the family of the late sovereign. Next, she married; and, properly enough, nothing was said about any increase of income. Now, she has a large family of children, and such claims and liabilities as grow up out of twelve years of sovereignty; and still we hear nothing of any royal needs or debts. She lives on her income, and pays as she goes; and perhaps she can never know how much she gains of the respect and affection of her subjects, by a prudence and conscientiousness so unusual in royalty, but as graceful there as in any other station.

As for the domestic respectability in more important respects which might now be looked for, it was really refreshing to the heart and soul of the nation. A new generation was now on the throne; and there was no scandal as yet, nor any reason to suppose there ever would be any. Here was no corruption bred of the royal marriage-law, nothing illicit, nothing questionable; but instead, a young girl, reared in health and simplicity, who might be expected to marry soon—making her choice for herself, so that there was every hope that she might love her husband, and be a good and happy wife. Thus far, all was sound and rational; and the event has proved it so. The unsound and irrational part of the popular joy and expectation was that for which she herself was in no way responsible, and for the injustice of which towards herself her most truly loyal subjects were the most grieved. She was taken to be, not only more able and wise than she was, but more wise and able than any person of her years is ever seen to be—not only more powerful than she was, but more so than any English sovereign, under our present constitution, can ever be; and there was every risk that when disappointment came, as come it must, the innocent sovereign would be punished for the unreasonableness of her adoring subjects. The wise protested against any expectation that a second English queen would have the genius of Elizabeth, without her despotic tendencies; or her royal maternity of feeling towards her people, in an age when the function itself is destroyed by the growth of

the representative system, and the sovereign is no longer the political ruler of England. The wise might protest; but the people, up to the most enlightened rank of them, expected from Queen Victoria things almost as wonderful as that she should go to the Rock of Cashel, accompanied by the Virgin, St. Francis, Daniel O'Connell, and Lord Normanby, and build up the old Munster Cathedral and the Catholic faith. Now that we had a virtuous sovereign strong in the energies of youth, all was to go well; the Lords were to work well with the Commons, the people were to be educated, everybody was to have employment and food, all reforms were to be carried through, and she herself would never do anything wrong or make any mistakes. The few who pointed out that she was human, and royal, and only eighteen; that it was an infinite blessing that she was pure and conscientious, and eminently truthful and sincere; that it was enough to expect, further, that she would be seriously willing to learn, careful in the choice of her advisers, and candid in recognising her own mistakes; and that it was a cruel injustice to require of her what she could never perform, and then visit the disappointment upon her—these few were thought cold and grudging in their loyalty, and the gust of national joy swept them out of sight. In truth, they themselves felt the danger of being carried adrift from their justice and prudence when they met their queen face to face at her proclamation. As she stood at the window of St. James's Palace, on the morning after her accession—at a window where few people knew that she was to appear—her pale face wet with tears, but calm and simply grave—her plain black dress and bands of brown hair giving an air of Quaker-like neatness, which enhanced the gravity—it was scarcely possible not to form wild hopes from such an aspect of sedateness; not to forget that, even if imperfection in the sovereign herself were out of the question, there were limitations in her position which must make her powerless for the redemption of her people, except through a wise choice of advisers, and the incalculable influence of a virtuous example shining abroad from the pinnacle of society. The comfort was at the moment, and has been more eminently so since, that there is a corre-

spending security in the powerlessness of British sovereigns. Whenever the 'war of opinion,' of which the world had been now and then reminded since Canning's time, should overrun Europe, the danger would be for kings who govern as well as reign; or for those who really reign instead of occupying the throne through a political fiction. If such an outbreak should occur in the time of Queen Victoria, she would, if personally blameless, be perfectly secure—secure alike in her political sinecurism and her personal blamelessness. This truth, perceived and expressed at the time, has been confirmed by events sooner than some expected. While revolutions have come like whirlwinds to sweep kings from their continental thrones, our sovereign has sat safe in her island, with not a hair of the royal ermine raised by the blast. If, on the one hand, she has been wholly and necessarily unable to do many things that were expected from her by the unreasonable, who worshipped an idea and not herself—on the other hand, we have her safe, and need fear no harm to the lightest of her royal sensibilities. If it is no longer the privilege it once was to be a sovereign, it is something of a blessing to have some power of kingly beneficence and influence still remaining, without the fearful responsibility for a ruling power which is mainly transferred to the people, and for which they must be responsible to each other.

As we have seen, the queen returned to the late ministers their seals of office; and it was presently known throughout the country that Lord Melbourne and his coadjutors were to be allowed another trial whether or not they could govern the country.

CHAPTER X.

Party Discontents—The Queen's Favour—Radical Reform Party.

In his speech of reprobation against the ministers, before quoted, Lord Lyndhurst said he saw 'but one ray of comfort shining upon' the prospects of the country; he augured

much from the character of the new sovereign. His party generally saw something brighter in the future—more rays of comfort than one.

The Melbourne ministry was reduced to its lowest point of weakness and shame. After the elections of 1831, only six county seats had been held by Tory members, and the Whig government had a majority of 300. That majority had declined to 26; and after the elections on the demise of the crown it sank again to 12. The Tories thought that a vigorous effort at the beginning of a new reign might give them everything; and they were evidently resolved to spare no exertions to unseat six reformers at least, and thus obtain a majority in the House. The case of the Whigs was desperate; and there is a tone in the political pamphlets of the time which shows this. The people were weary of the eternal disputes and party conflicts about Irish questions and Church questions, while the great interests that were dear to the Liberals of England and Scotland stood over for discussion in a future time which seemed further off every session. When a ministry knows what it is about, and sets well about its work, the opposition helps to govern the country, and does it almost as effectually, by testing and purifying government measures, as the responsible party itself; but the Melbourne administration was so weak and unskilful as to render the opposition purely destructive; and this was more than the country would or could bear. No small number of the Radical party themselves, and multitudes of the moderates throughout the country, began to declare that they hoped the Tories would get into office, so that the Whigs might recover vigour in opposition, and that the two reforming parties might once more come into union, and the country be, in one way or another, really governed once more. In such a condition of affairs, it was natural that the Conservatives should suppose themselves about to step into the seats of power. They were already making declarations, or dropping hints of what they should do in such a case; they should not repeal the poor-law, nor interfere with any expressed and fulfilled decision of parliament on any subject; but should preserve the Church from further spoliation; and so forth.

The alarm of the Whigs in office and their supporters is very evident now, to the reader of the election speeches and political pamphlets of 1837. The first thing they did was to assume full and exclusive possession of the young queen's favour, and to use to the utmost the advantage of her name in the elections. There is no doubt that the queen was ready to bestow her favour at once, on the pleasantest set of gentlemen she had ever known. She had seen little society before. Her life was necessarily somewhat monotonous. Now, she was suddenly introduced into daily official intercourse with half-a-dozen of the most intelligent and accomplished gentlemen of the aristocracy, who felt a sort of chivalrous interest in her position, who admired her spirit, and were gratified by her confidence, whose instruction and guidance were necessary to her at every turn of her new and important life, and whose wives, sisters, and daughters were planted about her, to worship while they served her. It is no matter of surprise that she allowed the coterie to take complete possession of her confidence and favour, while she yet needed hourly support and guidance, and knew no one beyond themselves. To the thoughtless, and to those inexperienced in political life, it appeared natural enough that the offices about the queen's person should be filled by ladies of the ministers' families; but the ministers were early warned of the inevitable consequences of such an arrangement; and they should have known them without being warned. If their own position had been less desperate, they might perhaps have paid more attention than they did to the future comfort and dignity of their royal mistress. They were timely warned that the wives, daughters, and sisters of the present ministers could not remain about the queen if the opposition leaders should come into power; and reminded that it would be hard upon the queen to be obliged to dismiss her personal attendants on the first occasion of a change of ministry. This was openly set forth thus early in the *Quarterly Review*, and in various newspapers; yet Lord Melbourne took no heed to the warning; and he and his coadjutors must bear the reproach of whatever unpopularity the queen incurred during the first two or three years of her reign, and of the perilous mistake in which

she found herself in the spring of 1839. They had their own share of punishment in the disgust excited by their selfish use of the power they so eagerly grasped. There was not a child in England, old enough to look at a newspaper, who did not see the unfairness of exclusively appropriating an inexperienced sovereign as the support of a party in the government which had no other support; and there was not a fine lady, or a footman, or an electioneering partisan, that did not feel the vulgarity of trumpeting the queen's name on the Whig hustings, and using her favour for the chance of obtaining a majority in parliament, which was otherwise hopeless. It is easy to enter into the feelings of these ministers and their families—to conceive of the interest to a sated man like Lord Melbourne of a fresh and singular object of observation and study—to one who was wont to despise women as he did, to find a young creature, truthful, conscientious, willing and eager to learn, and naturally led to learn of him, as a tutor or a father, as well as her first minister. We can easily sympathise with the excitement and enjoyment to all the rest of affectionately watching over and serving her who was then, perhaps, the most interesting person in the world. We can conceive of the dismay and heart-sorrow with which they would contemplate such a thing as being severed from her, and yielding up their places to antagonists who were strangers to her, and who would be a complete barrier between them and her. Such feelings were perfectly natural; so natural that everybody knew they must exist, and looked to see how they would be disciplined and controlled by a sense of duty to the sovereign and the country. They were not so disciplined and controlled; and no one else had it in his power to do the queen so much harm as she suffered from these devoted servants of hers. Lord Melbourne, always ostentatiously careless about business, was now for many hours daily at the palace. From the public and private talk of the coterie and their adherents, it was understood that the queen had her partialities among parties at the elections. In a painful and unfortunate mistake made by the young sovereign—a hasty suspicion touching the reputation of Lady Flora Hastings—two of the matron ladies of the household exercised their influence so incau-

tiously, and the prime-minister supported the consequent proceedings with so little delicacy to a wounded spirit, that public feeling was deeply offended. Their exclusive possession of the palace enabled the impure and disloyal to conceive of scandal, and send forth rumours, which would never have been dreamed of if the royal household had been constituted on the ordinary principle of bringing together persons so impartial in political affairs, or so well balanced against each other, as to be able to retain their places, and give their sovereign the comfort of their customary attendance, through any changes in the cabinet. It was very well to be prompt in calling the Bradshaws and the Robys to account, from the home office and the Horse Guards, for slandering the queen at public dinners: but members of parliament and officers of the army would never have uttered or listened to such slanderers if the guardianship of the queen's domestic life had not been appropriated by a coterie. Yet, with all that their use of the queen's name at the elections could do, the Whigs found themselves left with a majority of only twelve. A paragraph from a pamphlet of the day shows with what agonising earnestness they were driven to sue the radical reformers for aid. 'All parties,' says the writer, understood to be official, 'those for the ballot, those for extended suffrage, those for the abolition of church-rates, those for grand plans of public education, those for the appropriation clause, those for municipal institutions in Ireland, those for yielding to Canada a more democratic form of government than at present exists there, should one and all enter the new session with this conviction thoroughly impressed upon their minds, that there is not one of these questions, no, not one, which is not secondary to the great object of maintaining Lord Melbourne's cabinet, as the great agent of future improvement, free from every species of present embarrassment.'

It was impossible to read this without amusement. Even the most devoted adherents of Lord Melbourne could not read gravely such an imitation of his easy assurance. The writer might have been Lord Melbourne himself for the impudence—there is no other word—with which he connected ideas of 'improvement' and 'freedom from

embarrassment' with the Melbourne administration. The reply of the radical reformers to this appeal was characteristic. They showed how the existence of the Melbourne ministry depended on the prosecution of the very questions which it was proposed to put aside for the sake of it. They were willing to uphold the existing administration with all their forces, if it would mend its ways; and without that it could not be helped by anybody. They pointed out that, throughout the country, the moderate Whigs, wearied out, were becoming Radicals every day; and intimated that if the government would follow the example of these converts, it might be saved from ruin, but not otherwise. It might become Radical, or yield its place to the Conservatives; the one thing certain was that it could not remain what it was; and that a Tory rule would be better for the country, by rousing its energies, and testing its condition, than a continuance of a Whig government, which was merely a name.

From the beginning of the reform struggle, the number of radical reformers in the House had never been less than 70 or 80; and in the last parliament they had been 150. It was strange that they had not yet been a powerful party; and it would be stranger still if they did not become so now. Now was the time for them to show what they could do, when the Whigs were humbly asking alms of them—petitioning them for ideas and measures, and the support without which they must sink. These radical reform members were men of conscience, of enlightenment, of intellectual ability, and moral earnestness, of good station, and, generally speaking, independent fortune. They were so unlike the vulgar Tory representation of them—so far from being destructives and demagogues—that the sober-minded of the community might more reasonably trust them for the conservation of property than either the Conservatives or the Whigs. Whig government under Lord Melbourne was a lottery; and all propositions of the time for shaving the fundholder, for tampering with the debt, for perilling the land by a return to poor-law abuses, for interfering with the rights of property in its public investments and private operations—all such destructive schemes proceeded from the rankest Conservatives, and

were exhibited in *Quarterly Reviews*, Tory newspaper articles, Tory speeches on hustings. Not only in this sense were the Radicals no demagogues, and therefore fit to be the guides of the sober middle classes they were also no popular orators. They were as far removed from influence over the mob by the philosophical steadiness of their individual aims, as from influence over the aristocracy, by the philosophical depth and comprehensiveness of their views. They were as far from sharing the passion of the ignorant, as the selfish and shallow *nonchalance* of the aristocratic. They perceived principles which the untaught could not be made to see; and they had faith in principles when Lord Grey preached in his place that no one should hold to the impossible; and thus they were cut off from sympathy and its correlative power above and below. The aristocracy called them Destructives; and the non-electors knew nothing about them. All this should have been another form of appeal to them to make themselves felt in this gloomy time of crisis, when the fortunes of the nation were sinking at home, and storms seemed to be driving up from abroad, and the political virtue of Great Britain was in peril from a selfish powerlessness in high places, and despair in the lowest, and alternate apathy and passion in the regions which lay between. But there were reasons which prevented their making themselves felt. They were not properly a party, nor ever had been. There was not among them any one man who could merge the differences of the rest, and combine their working power, in deference to his own supremacy; and neither had they the other requisite—experience in party organisation. They might try for it, and now they probably would; but it was not a thing to be attained in a day, or in a session. It was never attained at all, during this period of our political history. The chiefs moved and spoke; but they neither regenerated nor superseded the Whigs, nor could keep out the Conservatives, when at last public necessity overcame Whig tenacity of office, and the queen's natural adherence to her first set of ministers, and brought in a new period marked by a complete dissolution and fresh fusion of parties. There was no other party which, in 1837, was known to include such men as Grote, and

Molesworth, and Roebuck—and Colonel Thompson, and Joseph Hume, and William Ewart—and Charles Buller, and Ward, and Villiers, and Bulwer, and Strutt; such a phalanx of strength as these men, with their philosophy, their science, their reading, their experience—the acuteness of some, the doggedness of others—the seriousness of most, and the mirth of a few—might have become, if they could have become a phalanx at all. But nothing was more remarkable about these men than their individuality. Colonel Thompson and Mr. Roebuck could never be conceived of as combining with any number of persons, for any object whatever; and they have so much to do, each in his individual function, that it would perhaps be an injury to the public service to withdraw them from that function; and when we look at the names of the rest, reasons seem to rise up why they too could not enter into a party organisation. Whether they could or not, they did not, conspicuously and effectively. They were called upon, before the opening of the new parliament, to prove betimes that they were not single-subject men—as reformers are pretty sure to be considered before they are compacted into a party; but to show that the principles which animated their prosecution of single reforms were applicable to the whole of legislation. If Mr. Hume still took charge of finance, and Mr. Grote of the ballot, and Mr. Roebuck of Canada, and Sir W. Molesworth of colonisation, and Mr. Ward of the appropriation principle, they must show that they were as competent to the enterprises of their friends, and of their enemies, as to their own. Many of them did this, but the association of their names with their particular measures might be too strong. They were never more regarded as a party during the period under our notice; and it may be observed now, though it was not then, that their failing to become a party in such a crisis as the last struggles of the Melbourne ministry, was a prophecy of the disintegration of parties which was at hand, and which is, in its turn, a prophecy of a new age in the political history of England.

What the Whig estimate of 'the crisis' was in the autumn of 1837, we have seen. What the Tory view was appears in the insulting speech of Lord Lyndhurst. Here

is the declaration of the radical reformers: 'To the people, at the present moment, we have but one exhortation to give—let them hold themselves in readiness. No one knows what times may be coming; no one knows how soon, or in what cause, his most strenuous exertions may be required. Ireland is already organised. Let England and Scotland be prepared at the first summons to start into political unions. Let the House of Commons be inundated with petitions on every subject on which reformers are able to agree. Let reformers meet, combine, and, above all, register. The time may be close at hand when the man who has lost a vote, which he might have given for the ballot, or for some other question of the first magnitude, will have cause bitterly to repent the negligence and supineness which have deprived him of his part in the struggle. All else may be left till the hour of need; but to secure a vote is a duty for which there is no postponement. This let the reformers do; and let them then stand at their arms, and wait their opportunity.'

This was but a lowering dayspring of regality for the young queen. Her servants were weak, assailed by vehement foes, and pitied by the supporters of whom they implored help. Everybody seemed aware that something fearful was impending; and the wise uttered cautions, and sent out admonitions, while the sovereign was launching into the pleasures of freedom and supremacy. As yet, smiles were on her face, and joy was in her movements, whenever she was seen in public; and the most serious and severe of those who watched her, hoped that she would not be officiously and too soon alarmed by tidings of the storms that were driving up from afar, and the gloom of distress which was deepening over the people at home.

CHAPTER XI.

Portents in Europe—France—The Representation—Free Trade Inquiry—Monster Trial—Plots—Strasburg Insurrection—Press Law—Foreign Relations—Algeria—Release of State Prisoners—Marriage of the Duke of Orleans—Of the Princess Marie—Distress—Dissolution of the Chamber—Death of Talleyrand—Spain—Queen Regent—Queen Isabella — Carlist War — British Legion — Three young Queens—Portugal—The English in Portugal—Portuguese Indigence — Central Europe — Zoll Verein — Austrian Commercial Treaty — Russia — The Emperor at Warsaw — Passage of the Dardanelles—Circassia—Persia—Cracow—Death of the Emperor of Austria—Coronation of his Successor—Hanover—Proceedings of the King—Denmark—Opening of a Constitution—Sweden and Norway—Holland and Belgium—Young Germany—Switzerland—Prince Louis Napoleon — Zillerthal Protestants — Lutherans of Prussia—Mixed Marriages—The Pietists—Hungary.

As for the state of affairs abroad, on the accession of Victoria to the British throne, it was a subject of anxious contemplation to persons who looked beneath the surface of royal speeches and official summaries, with the prophecy of a war of opinion in Europe full in their minds. As yet, there was no threat from any quarter of a dissolution of the great continental peace; and sovereigns congratulated themselves each on his good understanding with other sovereigns: but there were movements in several countries which showed to the observant that the opposition of the principles of despotism and liberty—of government for the people and government by the people—was working in the heart of society throughout western Europe, while the process was keenly watched from the great throne of despotism in the east. Of all the countries in which the preparation for a decisive war of opinion was going on, France was, for various reasons, the most interesting to England.

The obvious domestic politics of France might have appeared dull and tiresome enough to those who did not know what they signified. It is truly wearisome to look over the debates of the French chambers, and see how

the members were perpetually growing vehement about nothing at all; and pertinacious about the wording of a phrase, as if it had been the transfer of a crown: and obstructive in so many ways that there was no keeping any ministry in office. We read of new and newly arranged cabinets, till it is impossible to remember their succession, or to report the causes of their changes. As our concern with France on this page is only in her relation to England, there is no need to enter into any detail of her official fluctuations; but only to point to the conclusion, from the parliamentary records of France during these years, that they include more than meets the eye. In truth, there was no real parliamentary representation in France; an uneasy consciousness of the fact was growing daily in the general mind; and the king was resolved to repress the conviction, and prevent its being communicated. His whole reign was a concealed conflict with the representative system which he had sworn to maintain. Not only did he choose to rule instead of reigning; he chose to rule alone. His ministers must be his rivals if they were not his tools; and he 'knew how'—using the French phrase—to reduce the representative system to a mere show. While it was thus with him and the nation, much that appeared trifling in the debates of the chambers might be anything but trifling—might be symbolical of some great question, or prophetic of some great event. Leaving on one side, therefore, the manœuvres of cabinets and chambers, as giving us little knowledge but of that which may be better learned from events, we have only to take a rapid review of the transactions of the king with the French people, or with those of them who were brought into collision with him.

In 1835, a large number of petitions was presented to the Chamber of Deputies, exposing the deterioration of the representative system, and praying for a reform. As has been shown before, a change in the amount of qualification had raised the number of electors from 100,000 or less to 280,000; a number so small, in a population of above 30,000,000 as to make Englishmen wonder how it could afford any pretence of a popular representation at all. Yet it was to complain of the narrowing of even

this constituency, that the petitions of 1835 were sent in. The cause of that narrowing was declared to be the law of inheritance, which by continually lowering the incomes of individuals below the qualification point had already reduced the constituency to 180,000. Whether the cause was correctly stated or not, the fact was clear. And there were other facts well understood by the constituency, but not of a nature to be petitioned against at the moment—that by means of the centralising principle on which French administration proceeds, an amount of official patronage was in the hands of the government, by which it could subordinate the electoral colleges to almost any extent. The result of the present petitioning was satisfactory to the king at the moment; and he seems to have been as unable to look forward as Charles X. himself, and never to have heard or conceived of a possible war of opinion in Europe. He had in the chamber, in this very session, 200 members wholly at his disposal as functionaries of his government: two-thirds of them removable at pleasure, and the other third in a position of expectation of the rewards of obedience. The majority of the chamber found a pretext, without any difficulty, for ignoring the whole mass of petitions. Some petitioners desired such audacious changes as direct election, or universal suffrage in the primary electors, or abolition of the money qualification, or payment to the deputies; and because of these, the whole question was put aside. The king thought he was governing firmly and wisely. As for what the people thought—they remembered that after five years' rule of the citizen-king, they found their constituency reduced more than a third, and the remainder lying within the royal grasp; and their thoughts of this citizen-king were none of the kindest.

One victory was gained by the opposition in the chamber—much to the chagrin of the government, which was merely punished for driving too far a profitable monopoly of its own. The government succeeded in obtaining a renewal for five years of its tobacco monopoly; but the chamber decided by a large majority, that a committee of its members should sit to inquire into the operation of the monopoly. The introduction of parliamentary committees

was an annoyance to a government like that of France. M. Salvandy could see no good in it; and he deprecated such an adoption of the barbarisms of the English constitution.

One other reference to England at this time is amusing. The financial affairs of France presented a worse aspect every year. Every year there was a new deficit instead of a reparation of the last. Something must be done for the revival of commerce. The minister of commerce invited the merchants and manufacturers to enter with him into an inquiry into the principles of free-trade, and the operation of the existing restrictions, under which affairs were proceeding so badly. The merchants and manufacturers of France seem to have had at that time as little knowledge and independence as our farmers of the same date. They would not have their system touched. Every corps stood up for the protection of its own article, as a valiant M.P. from the glass districts stood up against Mr. Huskisson in the British House of Commons for the duty on green glass bottles. Whatever, in the changes of human affairs, might occur—whatever that was hurtful or foolish might be swept away—he owed it to his constituents to stand up to the last for the duty on green glass bottles. With equal valour did a corps of twenty-nine eminent manufacturers of plated goods in France contend for the continuance of the existing prohibitory duty on import; declaring, among other reasons, that the English government paid a large bounty on the exportation of plated goods; and that the men of Birmingham could supplant other manufacturers all over the world, because it was common for English lords to be sleeping partners in the Birmingham establishments for the manufacture of plated goods. It is both melancholy and amusing to look over the records of the proceedings of government and the chamber about customs-duties during the present and two succeeding years. They wanted to improve the revenue, and yet to keep the old duties; they were afraid to change their system at all, and yet could not go on with it as it was; they talked of removing prohibitions, but laid on prohibitory duties, as, for instance, a duty of £70 on a Turkey carpet fifteen feet square—which they called a

relaxation from prohibition. The government found that it would take half the people to control the smuggling propensities of the other half; and it used its power of lessening duties during the weeks or months when the chambers were not sitting; and sometimes the chambers were induced to render such relaxations permanent. But no government is a good man-of-business about commercial matters. When relief was given in one place, it usually happened to be at the expense of hardship in another; and a temporary lowering of duties by royal ordinance affords little inducement to careful merchants to send goods which may not be sold before a recurrence to the old duties takes place. It did not mend the condition of the people that a tax was laid on sugar of home production, as soon as it was found that the beet-root sugar of France supplied one-third of the national consumption. It was a matter of some deliberation whether to relieve from duty the sugar of the colonies, or to tax that of the home producer. The latter course was resolved on, together with some reduction of the colonial duty; and the condition of the people was not to be improved in this direction. The national poverty, previously great, had been deepening since the revolution of 1830. While he had before his eyes an annual deficiency in the revenue, a spreading poverty among the people, and a narrowing of the constituency by which alone they could speak their grievances, and hope to amend their affairs, the citizen-king thought he was governing firmly and well, and bringing the nation into order. He was hoping to keep the kettle bright and undimmed over the fire by stopping the spout after fastening down the lid.

The king was bent on bringing to trial some hundreds of his subjects accused of republicanism. The opposition desired an amnesty, and his ministers were so opposed to his dangerous and foolish design, that they laid down their offices; and for three weeks France was without a government. The king had his way at last: the ministers returned under a new head; and the Chamber of Peers was appointed to conduct the 'monster trial,' as it was called at the time. They examined the case of 1000 prisoners, and selected 164 for trial. Then followed

scandal upon scandal. The government and the bar fell out about the defence of the prisoners; and a sort of compromise was entered into at last, for the sake of safety—a compromise which left both parties discontented. Then the prisoners would not be defended as proposed—would not acknowledge the jurisdiction of the court—would not hear the accusation, and after a time, would not come to the bar—would not leave their beds, would not rise from the floor of their cells, where some chose to lie without any clothing whatever. Never was such a scene witnessed in any court of justice as the demeanour of these prisoners—the whole mob of them jumping, waving their hats, screaming, and defying the court and all its officers. Then followed the disposal of them in batches, as there was no other way of managing them; and by that method, the grand plea of the prosecution—of conspiracy among the prisoners generally to establish a republic—was in fact surrendered. One of the accused, in complaining of the method of trial, called Louis Philippe a tyrant, and threatened him with the tyrant's fate of exile; and for this offence, so excusable, as many thought, under the circumstances, the man, already on trial for a more serious offence, was condemned to a heavy fine, and to an imprisonment of five years, with loss of civil rights for that time. Of the Lyon batch of fifty-eight, nine were acquitted, and the rest condemned to terms of imprisonment, rising from three years to imprisonment for life. As for the Paris batch—they made a hole through the wall of their wine-cellar, and walked out into the garden of a neighbour, and thence, many of them, out of the kingdom. Twenty-eight fugitives from the cellar published a threat that they would come back and compel the peers to try them when the conditions of a fair trial had been secured for them. Only thirteen were stopped, or afterwards caught. It was naturally said that the escape was probably connived at, to rid the peers and the country of the scandal and perplexity into which the self-will of the king had brought his government.

It was now no longer possible for the people to think the government of the citizen-king as good as he thought it himself. If he had been right in supposing that such

a method of rule as his was the only one suitable to the French people, they could not be expected to agree with him; and, while the virtuous and sober-minded were grieving over their having been deceived and betrayed—finding themselves now, after five years, without a free press, without popular representation, with an administration of royal tools, with a failing exchequer, and surrounded by a distressed people—it was no wonder that men who were not virtuous, and not sober-minded, should ponder the shortest way of getting rid of such a state of things, and decide upon the murder of the king. There seemed to be no end to the attacks upon his life. Fieschi fired his infernal machine, as the royal procession passed, killing and wounding between twenty and thirty persons, but not the king, who was saved by the moment of time required by the assassin for withdrawing the Persian window-blind from before his gun-barrels. Marshal Mortier, late president of the council, was killed on the spot. Next, Alibaud made his attempt—coming up to the carriage-door, and resting his weapon on the window while he fired—the wife and sister of the king being in the carriage. This time, the king was saved by the act of bowing to some National Guards at the other window. Next, Meunier made his attempt, shooting at the royal head as the carriage ploughed its way slowly through the snow. The king was untouched; but his eldest son was cut on the ear by the shivered glass. 'I know not,' said the king, 'how I escaped, as, at the moment, I had my head very much advanced towards the door of the carriage. Nemours, who was also leaning forwards, had his head against the glass.' Within two months—in February 1837—Champion and his accomplices were finishing another infernal machine, which they resolved should not fail; but the police found them out, and Champion hung himself in prison. In the next May there was a review of the National Guards—gloomy enough. Every house that commanded the ground was searched by the police, and the inhabitants examined; all the approaches were blockaded, and the ground well selected. Before the year was out, Hubert and Steuble were engaged on a third infernal machine—'sixteen gun-barrels, in two

rows of eight each'—from which the king could by no means escape. But again the police found it all out. The public were weary of such stories by this time, and it seemed that the king could be taken good care of by the police · so there was an apathy among respectable citizens on this last occasion which somewhat shocked the government, and which was not dispersed even when the traitors became riotous on receiving sentence, and were sustained by the sympathy of the people in court, who hissed, groaned, and cried 'murder,' till the guards were called in to clear the place.

A military insurrection was interposed among these attempts at assassination. Napoleon and Josephine planned a marriage between Josephine's daughter Hortense and Napoleon's third brother, Louis, for a time King of Holland; and this marriage was forced on, in defiance of the mutual disinclination of the parties most concerned. The union was a wretched one—the husband and wife rarely meeting, and being quite unable to continue together. The only surviving issue of this marriage, at the date before us, was Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, then a captain of artillery in the Swiss service. He obtained a footing in the garrison of Strasburg; and on the morning of the 30th of October 1836, showed himself there, in a dress resembling his uncle's, and proposed to call France to arms, to place him on the throne. Some of the men shouted for Napoleon II.; but presently, while the prince and some attendants were addressing a few soldiers in a barrack, the gates were shut upon them, and they were arrested. By the end of November, the prince was half-way over the Atlantic, being banished to the United States. His accomplices were actually acquitted, in the face of indisputable evidence of their treason. The crowd, the garrison, and the general population of Strasburg rejoiced without control, and spent the day as a fête; and the gloom of the ministers and dismay of the king were in proportion. The mother of Prince Louis Napoleon died in the next October, her failing health being broken up by anxiety for her only son.

Such events as these, bringing after them evidences of an unpopularity of the sovereign extending far beyond

the mad conspirators themselves, seem to have merely exasperated the self-will and folly of the king; and the most conspicuous proof of this, and of his unfitness for the office of citizen-king, appears in his insufferable repression of the press. Before the end of 1835, he was actually holding the position of Charles X. against the press. The prosecution of journals, and fining and imprisonment of editors, had gone on till some of the liberal newspapers were ruined. The *Tribune* gave up, after having been prosecuted 112 times. But this was found insufficient; and new laws were proposed to protect the prosperity of France—'a prosperity of five years intermingled with danger'—by shielding 'the king of her choice' against attacks. 'Order was not yet completely established;' neither a Carlist press nor a republican press could be permitted to exist; and the law proposed for putting them down equals any Carlist despotism which could be conceived of by a Polignac. Fine and imprisonment were to be the consequence of introducing the king, either directly or indirectly, or by any allusion, into any discussion of the acts of the government; also of expressing any wish, hope, or threat in relation to either Carlism or republicanism. The bill, with a long list of atrocious provisions, was carried by the power of the crown and its functionaries; the heart-stricken opposition, who now saw their country and themselves under a precisely similar oppression to that which they had thrown off five years before, giving solemn warning that 'laws like the present might afflict, but could not terrify, good men;' and that the matter could not end here. The condition of the French nation, in regard to its liberties, was even worse than it had been in 1830; for now the blow at freedom of speech was struck not only by king and ministers, but with the aid of the chambers. The king had got but too much of the representation into his own grasp; and the state of the nation was so much worse than it had been in 1830, that good men thought it their duty rather to endure than to resist under circumstances so perilous to order and freedom. The king followed up this law with prosecutions of editors for assertions in their newspapers, that the ministers wished to show that they could now do

what the ministers of Charles X. attempted in 1830; and that the army was not favourable to the administration, and might be found inclined to a republic, if asked. There was also a creation of thirty new peers, in the king's interest, immediately after the passage of the law which brought offences of the press under the jurisdiction of the Chamber of Peers. It is merely sickening to go into the details of the press-prosecutions of the period. The government was evidently nervous under the perpetual echoing of its own fears in the popular newspapers —at the Carlist hints and demonstrations which followed on the death of Charles X. in 1836, and the speculations on the disaffection of the army which formed the commentary on the Strasburg affair: they had gone too far to recede; and now they found the objectionable matter which formed the material of the prosecutions reproduced in court, under circumstances of emphasis which made it ten times as pernicious as if it had been let alone. There were multitudes who recalled, and repeated to each other, the dying words of Lafayette about their dreadful mistake in regard to their citizen-king; while the few who looked ahead and afar saw how France was daily losing her chance of assuming her proper place in the array of nations, whenever the war of opinion in Europe should arise.

Meantime, the one cheering topic in the king's speeches, in successive years, was his good understanding with England. There had been a narrow escape from a war with America—an escape purchased by a somewhat ignominious concession—by a swallowing of some big, hard words, while paying money due to America which ought to have been paid long before. There was a 'momentary misunderstanding with Switzerland,' threatening immediate collision—turning upon the question whether an incendiary of the name of Conseil was or was not a spy of the French government. There had been 'painful losses in Africa,' which had 'deeply afflicted' the king's heart. Algiers was a perpetual and a growing trouble, from its expensiveness and unprofitableness; and there were terrible reverses there at this period—the indomitable Abd-el-Kader and the Emperor of Morocco having inflicted rout

and disaster which could not be disguised or palliated, even in the king's speech. The fact was, the French held merely their own fortified settlements in that which they called their colony of Algeria. Beyond the defences nothing could be done; for a vigilant enemy, native to the soil, and animated by the fiercest love of country and religion, was always at hand to cut off stragglers, and destroy the processes of industry. From Algeria, nothing was heard of at this time but 'painful losses,' dismal anticipations, and warnings that the African foe was covertly supported by Turkey. The princes of the blood repaired to Africa, to command and fight; large reinforcements of men and money were sent; and there was new food for discontent at home, in the alleged misdirection of the civil and military affairs of Algeria, and that profitless expense of the settlement, which made it 'an affliction to France.' There was more unpopularity yet to be incurred by the king. He does not appear to have suffered by his clemency to the ministers of Charles X., whom he released on the death of their master, and permitted to reside on their own estates, on parole—except Polignac, who was exiled for twenty years. His own constituent subjects had perhaps lost much of their indignant feeling towards the Polignacs and Peyronnets, now that a stronger indignation had been incurred by the successor of the old Bourbon king; and the sickly prisoners were allowed quietly to come forth from their captivity, and go home, to live there in obscurity. If the king lost nothing by this, neither did he gain much by an act of amnesty which accompanied it. By royal ordinance, issued in October 1836, sixty-two political offenders were discharged from further punishment, being merely placed under the surveillance of the police. It was thought that the consequences of political persecution were beginning to be apparent to the king, and that his prudence had taken the alarm; but his warfare with the press did not intermit or slacken, as we have seen. In his speech for 1837, he spoke of the finances as being 'in a most prosperous state'—that is, promising a small surplus, in the place of the usual deficit; and he intimated that a great mass of public works would be undertaken, to give employment to the

people. There was some surprise at this tone being taken during a period of grievous commercial and agricultural distress; but the surprise ceased when it presently appeared that the king meant to ask the chambers for money, for family purposes. His children were growing up and marrying; and he now wanted a provision for the Duc de Nemours, his second son, for whom he asked a gift of two estates, and a marriage-portion for his eldest daughter, the Queen of the Belgians. The latter was obtained, after much angry debating, and many protests against enriching from the public purse the children of a king who was considered very wealthy in the possession of the property of the crown, the estates of the House of Orleans, and, in the name of one of his sons, the wealth of the House of Condé. The other demand was withdrawn for the present, with much mortification on the part of the government; but the times were not such as made the people, or the chambers, willing to endow the Duc de Nemours from the public purse. Another reason was that a fresh call was to be made, on behalf of the eldest son—the Duke of Orleans—who was about to marry the Princess Helena of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The chamber doubled the prince's allowance, hitherto £40,000—made a present of £40,000 to the bride for her outfit—and fixed her jointure at £12,000. The marriage took place in May 1837; and in August of the next year was born the infant who was hailed as the heir of the throne of France. There were many who doubted whether such would ever be his position; for it had long been said by impartial observers that no son of the citizen-king would ever be permitted to succeed him; but there was probably no one who anticipated the full melancholy of that marriage—the domestic uneasiness—the sudden violent death of the prince in the vigour of his years, and the expulsion of his widow and child from the kingdom and from all hope of a throne. The superstition which is so easily excited in the French mind had, however, scope on occasion of the marriage—as at the bridal of the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette in the last century, and of Napoleon and Marie Louise—when fearful accidents happened. When the Duke and Duchess of Orleans entered Paris, a few days

after their marriage, a sudden panic seized the crowds that were closely packed in the Champ de Mars. In the rush towards the outlets, nearly thirty persons were trampled to death; and many more were injured. Another child of the Orleans House was married in the autumn of the same year—the beloved Princess Marie—the darling of her parents' hearts—she who sculptured the Joan of Arc which is seen in many a house in England, and is carried on the heads of Italian boys, through all the streets of Europe. This richly endowed young creature became the bride of Prince Alexander of Würtemberg; but his happiness was not to last long. He laid his young wife in her grave within fifteen months. Her constitution had been much shaken from her constant alarms for her father's life. She gave birth to a son in the autumn of 1838, became consumptive, and died on the 2nd of January 1839. The day after her death became known in Paris, the Chamber of Deputies rose, as by an impulse, to go and address the king; and this was the most numerous and the most cordial attendance of deputies that he had ever been greeted with.

We find no records of financial prosperity elsewhere than in the king's speech. Every other register tells of distress, embarrassment, fear, and local tumults. It was observed by the government, and told in the chamber, that the number of foreign refugees in France was large, and continually on the increase. The Poles were treated with great favour—being admitted free of cost to educational privileges, and trusted with office under government; it was not therefore surprising that there were then nearly 6,000 Poles in France. In this fact, perhaps, lay the most hopeful indication that, in case of a war of opinion in Europe, France would be found in front of the western combination which must oppose the incursion of despotism from the east. Amidst such gloom as has been described—gloom over which the royal weddings of the year shed but a dim and partial light—the Chamber of Deputies was dissolved, and men were left in expectation as to what the citizen-king would do with a new parliament, and whether the parliament would prove itself most worthy of king or people.

A man of an older time—a man of various times, and of a flexibility which adapted him to them all—Prince Talleyrand—was about to close his eyes on this new phase of French destiny. He was eighty-four, and it was time for him to be going. There was no further honour for him in the future; he had had his good things in his lifetime; whether they had made him happy or not, he must be satisfied with them now; for there was nothing more for him—not a trace of true honour—not a fragment of esteem—not a movement of affection. He was the marvel of his age for suppleness and prosperity; and he will stand in history as a specimen—dry and curious—but in no way as a vital being, noble, beautiful, or interesting. He knew everybody for eighty years—made use of everybody—consorted with everybody—flattered everybody—served anybody when there was no politic objection to doing so—and cared for nobody. He preserved to the last his most conspicuous talents, being capable of flattery while almost incapable of speech. On the entrance of the king and his sister, a few hours before the old courtier's death, he exclaimed: 'This is a great day for our house!' It is possible that, in virtue of his long training in worldliness, he might consider the day as more important to his house from a king's visit than from his own death. However that might be, he died at four, the same afternoon, the 17th of May 1838. The tidings of his death spread like a whiff of fresh air among those whom he had parched by the atmosphere of his worldliness. Yet the citizen-king is said to have left his chamber in tears.

In Spain, nothing passed during the period under review that it is either pleasant or profitable to dwell on. The two interests which absorbed the Spanish nation were the Carlist war and the government of the queen-regent. The liberal party throughout the west of Europe—both governments and individuals—were pledged to the maintenance of the infant queen, Isabella II., upon the throne; and therefore, the queen-regent, her mother, was to govern under a profession of liberalism. It is well known now that she is not a woman who can conceive of the benefits of liberal institutions, or who could be trusted to rule at all. Hard, selfish, intriguing, hopelessly ignorant—she

was equally a misfortune, as mother of the little queen, and regent of the country. Her daughter received no training which could fit her for her regal function; and the country could learn no other lesson under Christina than to despise its rulers. The young Isabella had but a poor chance at best for health, sense, knowledge, and integrity. As it was, she became a spoiled child of the lowest order—alternately humoured and tyrannised over—flattered and mortified. She appeared before the eyes of her subjects as a sickly, fretful, and wilful child—eternally eating sweetmeats, and concocting caprices, and wholly incapable of intellectual entertainment or moral devotedness. The public news that reached her was of innumerable insurrections, in half the towns of her kingdom; street-fights, up to her palace doors; attacks on convents, and the murder of ten monks in one place, and twelve in another; seizure of plate from the altar; delivering up of ringleaders by their comrades; and the shooting of scores of citizens in a row. Then, there were changes of ministry for ever; swearings to constitutions, one after another, each of which was to last for ever; pledges of reforms, pompously announced, and never carried out; professions of patriotism and universal benevolence, which were met by imputations of the vilest political profligacy. Amidst the manifold misfortunes of the young queens of Spain and Portugal, none can be greater than the fearful hollowness by which they have been surrounded since their birth. They had better have been daughters of herdsmen on Etna—out with their distaffs upon the slopes, and feeling the vibration under their feet, and seeing the sulphurous chasms open wherever they tread, and flying from clouds of poisonous ashes—better have lived in honest apprehension like this, than have had their ears filled with talk of virtue which, from its staleness, fell dead upon the soul, and have been constantly in the reception of homage so false as to drive them to intrigue or self-will in mere pursuit of a welfare which they could not intrust to anybody else. What the young Isabella heard of was valour, devotedness, martyrdom for freedom, sublime disinterestedness; what she knew to be fact was treachery cruelty, rapacity, selfish ambition,

fickleness, and incapacity. As for the reforms proposed from time to time, and discussed by the cortes, there was no leisure for their prosecution, amidst the perpetual alarms of war, and occurrence of insurrections; and the state of the finances was too desperate to afford hope of any really good government which did not begin by their rectification.

As for the other department of Spanish interests—the war between the queen and her uncle, Don Carlos—it is too disgusting and terrible to be needlessly contemplated. In 1835, the Carlists encouraged the discontents of the most extravagant of the liberal party, in the hope of profiting by the embarrassment of the government; and they succeeded. They obtained many advantages in the north of Spain, where the warfare chiefly lay. The cruelty on both sides became so atrocious, that the Duke of Wellington sent out Lord Eliot, during the short Peel administration of that year, to endeavour to bring the hostile leaders to an agreement to spare the lives of their prisoners. For a short time, this did good; but in the next year, a circumstance happened which seemed to turn the combatants on both sides into devils; and it was from that time impossible for human power to soften the diabolism of the war. The mother of Cabrera, the Carlist leader of the hour, had been accused of some traitorous meddling, and, as the queen's general declared in his own defence, sentenced to death. But she was a poor old woman of seventy, whose example, or whose life, could be of no public importance. The governor of Tortosa was required by the queen's officer to deliver her up for execution in retaliation for some slaughterous deeds of her son's. The governor refused; and application was made to General Mina, the queen's commander-in-chief, who actually enforced the order, and had the poor creature shot in the public square of Tortosa. Cabrera was driven frantic by this act, being 'romantically attached' to his mother. He declared that thirty women should suffer a similar fate, as his tribute to his mother's memory. He immediately executed four ladies—wives of officers—whom he had captured, and several more afterwards. This is enough. We see here all that is necessary to our review

of the time, and to our appreciation of the part taken in the war by Englishmen. It is not pleasant to have to record that Englishmen had any share whatever in a war so barbarous as to shed more or less disgrace on all who voluntarily aided either side; and so ill conducted as to cast no reflex glory on the act. There is something repugnant to the feelings of Englishmen, in our present age and state of advancement, in our countrymen going forth as mercenaries, by their own choice, to fight in a quarrel of succession in any foreign country; and our inclination leads us to be as cursory as possible in our notice of the British Legion which went to Spain under General Evans in 1835.

When the queen's government became alarmed by the successes of the Carlists in that year, the cabinet applied for aid to the three powers in alliance with Spain—Britain, France, and Portugal. Britain declined to send troops, though she would not object to France doing so; and the arms and ammunition already furnished to the amount of £200,000, were considered sufficient. France followed the example of England—promising, however, that the Pyrenean frontier should be watched, that no assistance might reach the Carlists by that way. Portugal was bound by a recent treaty to send 6,000 troops when required; but it was found inconvenient and dangerous to do so, and the queen broke her engagement—breaking up her cabinet, and one or two succeeding ones on the occasion. Failing thus far, the Spanish cabinet next desired of the King of England that he would suspend the Foreign Enlistment Act, that the Spanish government might raise in England a body of 11,000 mercenaries. This was done in June 1835; and during the summer months, the strange spectacle was seen of recruiting through the towns and villages of Great Britain. It is impossible that the merits of the case could have been understood by all those who enlisted. They went out to war as a trade or an adventure, without even the name of a great popular cause to inscribe upon their banners. We have an account of the affair from a volunteer who owns that he anticipated but little fighting, but hoped that the mere showing themselves would put force into

the queen's troops, and annihilate the Carlists; and then he intended to write a book about Spain, and publish it when he came home at the end of a year. A melancholy picture might be given from his pages of the exasperating and humiliating sufferings undergone by the British Legion in Spain, and the insulting ingratitude with which they were treated; but this is needless, as the whole affair ought to be regarded as a private speculation—no more claiming a place in history than any unfortunate commercial or agricultural adventure, by sea or land. The soldiers of the legion were starved, frozen, shot, distrusted, deceived, forsaken, and finally left unpaid. In the midst of all this, an order issued by General Evans cast a fearful light on the nature of the enterprise which he led. He issued a proclamation in June 1836, declaring that, as the legion was now in junction with the British Marines, every Englishman found fighting on the side of Don Carlos would be put to death as a traitor to the King of England. A commander of mercenaries could with an ill grace so threaten mercenaries on the other side—be the Royal Marines present or absent. If the Foreign Enlistment Act was suspended, it was unreasonable to quarrel with men for using their freedom of enlistment in aid of any cause which might seem good in their eyes. Either way, it appeared that Englishmen were to slay Englishmen in a cause for which none of them cared. During these years, the Carlists now and then swept through Spain and back again to their mountains, as if to prove that they were not unacceptable to the nation who let them pass, without hindrance and without loss. Now we see them down in the extreme south-west—on the very coast—often hemmed in, but always getting out, and dragging two or three royal armies helplessly after them; and again, at the gates of Madrid—the queen quaking in her palace, or flying by night. In the year 1838, the Carlists received some checks, in alternation with their victories. Don Carlos married in that year—his sister-in-law, the widow of Don Pedro, having crossed France privately to become his bride, under a dispensation from the pope. It was hoped that this lady might bring some humanising influences into his camp, and relieve the horror with

which it was regarded by the world. As for the royal cause—the queen-regent spoke in strong terms of the friendship of the Queen of England, and of hope from various sources; but her voice and manner were faint and faltering, and no one wondered; for the state was bankrupt in fact, while pompous in professions; and the forlorn condition of her little daughter must have struck the regent more forcibly than ever while she was exhibiting the value of the friendship of the Queen of England.

It seemed somewhat like a mockery of the monarchical system from one point of view, or an emphatic tribute to it from another, that there should have been at one time three queens in Europe who came to the throne between the ages of three and eighteen; a mockery, if the mental and moral qualities of two out of the three were regarded, and a tribute to the power of the theory and ideal when it was seen how all were supported in their kingly seat—whether in consequence or in spite of their personal qualities. The spoiled child in Spain, and the wilful girl in Portugal, were queens still, in the midst of state poverty, turbulence, and popular discontents without end—as truly as the intelligent and conscientious Victoria, who had reached womanhood before she became queen. Isabella was not yet old enough to cause trouble to her ministers by her own qualities; but her neighbour at Lisbon was. The Queen of Portugal was seventeen when she married again in 1835; and she had been for some time out of her minority. She left her ministers no peace. A serious quarrel at this time was about making her new husband commander-in-chief. She was resolved that it should be so, and had agreed expressly to the arrangement as a part of the marriage stipulations, though her ministers and parliament were pledged by a late decision, made to meet the case, not to permit any foreigner to hold that most responsible office. Ministry and parliament were broken up in consequence; and in the midst of the confusion, before the new cortes met, there was a revolution: the queen was compelled to accept the constitution of 1820, and to deprive her husband of his office, because it was incompatible with the working of that constitution. The assent of the queen and her friends to the instrument was

obtained by mere force—by the military surrounding the palace. From that time incessant fluctuations were taking place—risings, fallings, successes, reverses, of the different political parties in the state, till the mind of the reader becomes confused, and gives up all hope of understanding the politics of Portugal. Two matters, however, stand out clear. An heir to the throne was born in September 1837, and another son in October 1838. And the great commercial treaty with Great Britain, the Methuen Treaty, expired, on notice from the Portuguese government. Efforts were made for the renewal of the treaty; but the disturbed state of public affairs prevented any settlement. This might be of less consequence to England than old-fashioned statesmen might easily suppose. Mr. Clay said to an English traveller at Washington, in 1835: 'I cannot but wonder at the anxiety of your ministers about the Methuen Treaty, while they think so little of free-trade with growing nations. In Portugal you never had, and never will have, anything but two millions of priests and beggars for customers; while here you might have sixteen millions at once—likely to double their number in a quarter of a century.' Those who saw the matter from Mr. Clay's point of view cared little for the renewal of any commercial treaty with Portugal, except from a natural tendency to hold to 'our old and faithful ally;' a description which imports more to an English ear than an American can be expected to understand.

There were other points only too clear in the condition and temper of Portugal. Our 'old and faithful ally' was very unhappy, and therefore very ill-tempered. The English were treated with an insolence and malignity which could not have been endured but through a proud compassion. The British auxiliaries were unpaid; and they received nothing but insult when they applied for their dues. So outrageous was the spirit against the English, that their admiral on the station thought it necessary to issue a general order to his captains not to visit the palace, or hold any communication with persons in authority, lest the intention of England should be misunderstood. The British were above taking offence—so low was their poor ally sunk; but they endeavoured to

avoid all occasion of quarrel. At this time, Portugal was bankrupt, and was in danger of a public announcement of the fact. In the summer of 1838, there was a run on the banks of Lisbon and Oporto; and the cortes proposed to declare a national bankruptcy. The Bank of Lisbon and a mercantile company offered a loan to avert this catastrophe; and after some hesitation and debate, it was accepted. For some time past, there had been no paper and printing allowed for the acts of the cortes, from the positive beggary of the treasury. It was clear that the British auxiliaries need not expect their pay. It was also very clear that, if a war of opinion in Europe should arise, the western element of constitutional freedom could hardly be reinforced by either Spain or Portugal.

As for the central countries of Europe, they yielded ample evidence to those who were on the watch that the storm was daily gathering which must burst before a genuine peace could be relied on for Europe. Those conflicts of opinion were going forward which would lead to war, sooner or later; and in this short period the advance towards a crisis is perceptible enough. The debated questions during the time were religious, political, and commercial—the commercial being of importance chiefly as being in fact political. Another token of preparation for a future general conflict was that political affinities, and no longer territorial relations, began to determine the classification of European parties. The despots of the east and old-fashioned diplomatists talked of geographical alliances as an ordination of nature—as the safe old principle to which the world would return, as soon as demagogues could be silenced; but not the less did men of a higher sagacity perceive that all geographical alliances must give way before the force of political affinities; that Poland and Hungary could not be kept down, if they chose to be free, however surrounded by the despotism of the eastern section of Europe; and that Portugal could not enjoy rational liberty at all the more for her position, unless she became capable of freedom within herself.

This period is remarkable for the formation of the great commercial league of Germany. The states of Germany had hitherto gone to work, each in its own way, about its

customs-duties—about fixing their amount, and levying them. Each little state had its own complete fence of custom-houses, and its own scale of duties; and the inconvenience, injury, and ill-humour caused by such a plan were clear to everybody. It was the King of Prussia who exerted himself to substitute a better system; and his ultimate success was an excellent test of the temper and commercial philosophy of Englishmen. Many made an outcry that it was the Emperor of Russia who was really the mover—instigating his Prussian friend to an achievement by which he hoped to humble the manufacturing and commercial consequence of Great Britain; but the true free-traders of England saw the matter in a happier light. They saw that England must make haste to remove what restrictions remained on any branch of her commerce; but, that done, it would be cause of mere rejoicing when restrictions on commerce were done away in any part of the world, since the natural prosperity of any one part is more or less good for every other. Such observers looked on with deep interest, unmixed with fear, while state after state joined the great league—one being at length persuaded to lower its duties, and another to raise them, till the desired equalisation was established, and the countries of Germany ceased to be foreign to each other. Baden held out long, on account of her nearness to France; but she joined in 1835. Nassau held out one year longer. The free city of Frankfort was kept back by an existing treaty with England which was incompatible with the new arrangement; but the British government saw how Frankfort would be injured by exclusion from the league, and, with her, such British commerce as went forward there; and the treaty was given up. In January 1836, Frankfort entered the league, and the King of Prussia saw his great work complete, though no one called it faultless. Some of its provisions were seen to be unwise, and others might turn out so in practice; but here was a commercial union, extending from the Baltic and the Niemen to the Alps and the Lake of Constance. Old-fashioned politicians regarded with satisfaction what they took for a return to a natural state of territorial sympathy; while men of the new school saw in the arrangement an important aid in the preserva-

tion of peace, in times of political irritation. A commercial treaty between Austria and England was concluded in 1838, by which the Danube was freely opened to British vessels, as far as Galatz, and all British ports, with Malta and Gibraltar, as freely to Austrian vessels. Under the dread of Russia which at this period afflicted a great number of Englishmen to a point beyond all reason and all dignity, this treaty was regarded as a Russian work, as much as the Prussian league; and it was predicted that, by a quiet neglect of shoals and sandbars near the outlets of the Danube, Russia would obtain almost exclusive control over the pulsations of that great artery of the life of despotism.

Exaggerated and malignant as were the fears of some of our countrymen about Russia, there were few sensible men who thought them wholly baseless. No one who looked forward to an ultimate war of opinion in Europe could fail to see that Russia herself occupied nearly one-half of the speculation. She might be poor, in proportion to her bulk—ill-compacted, corrupt, slavish, possessed of few of the modern elements of power; but she had the ancient, and they would tell for much in a struggle to establish ancient principles of domination. She was military throughout her whole organisation—as completely formed for foreign invasion as incapable of domestic prosperity and peace. She sits looking abroad over Europe—the representative there of Asiatic despotism; and her character does not change as years pass on. While modification proceeds everywhere else—while Denmark and Prussia were talking of having parliaments, and Austria was penetrated by new ideas, Russia has remained what she was—possessed of the ancient elements of power, and universally supposed to be inclined to use them for the destruction of the modern, which are in her eyes purely a nuisance. She was not inactive, while thus unchangeable. She has her feelers out in all extremities of the earth and bounds of the sea, and everywhere she silently plants her force while men are looking another way. Wherever people of any nation go, they find that Russia has been before them. If they go fur-hunting in the northern wilds of America, they come upon a Russian fort. If they wander to an

inland sea in Asia, on some commanding promontory they find a Russian fort. Among the swamps of an African delta, or the sands at the mouth of the Red River, they find a Russian fort. If these are not hints of a project of a future universal empire, they are at least a fact which should go for what it is worth, on the face of it. It may be absurd enough to allege—as some wild terrorists have done—that a British statesman has, in our day, been found purchasable by Russian gold; it may be fanciful to imagine the voice of Russia to be whispering the terms of every treaty, and the hand of Russia conducting every transaction throughout the length and breadth of Europe; but it would be mere carelessness not to watch her movements, and a treachery to the cause of freedom to forget that from Russia will proceed, sooner or later, the most perilous attacks she has yet to sustain.

Putting aside the surmises of alarmists, we find the Emperor of Russia laying a heavy hand, here and there, on the destinies of nations. In the autumn of 1835, he met the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria, in the course of a journey; but whether the despots had any purpose in meeting beyond reviewing their troops, no one knew. On his return, the Emperor of Russia stopped at Warsaw; and the violence of his imperial wrath there expressed went so much beyond what appeared prudent to everybody but himself, that it was widely believed that he was mad. He told the authorities of Warsaw that he was calm, and spoke without rancour; and he assured them that if they cherished any illusion of the nationality of Poland, it should be the worse for them; if they manifested in any way such an idea, he would level Warsaw with the ground. He desired that what he said might be fixed in their memories; and truly, it was not likely to be forgotten. The speech found its way into a French newspaper; and thence it spread over the world, greatly reviving popular sympathy with the Polish cause. This was increased by his audacious act of raising a loan in the name of Poland, which caused the Polish refugees in all countries to warn the world publicly that Poland disclaimed the loan, and considered every man the enemy of that country who contributed by this mode to the increase of its burdens. As

for Turkey, she was wholly in the power of Russia, now that Russia had saved her from Egypt; and she obeyed, when required to promise that no armed vessel should pass from the Mediterranean into the Black Sea, without the express permission of Russia. In the Treaty of Adrianople, Circassia had been made over to Russia; but the Circassians did not acquiesce, and fought a noble battle, from year to year, in resistance to the annexation. The best rulers and soldiers of the east in our time have come from Circassia; and no one wonders at this who watches the conflict between the exasperation of Russia and the patriotism of Circassia. During the period before us, the Russians made little or no progress—the climate and structure of the country being as fatal to them as favourable to the inhabitants. This war brought England into apparent danger of a collision with Russia. An English vessel, the *Vixen*, landed salt on the coast, at a port which the Circassians had recovered from their foe. A Russian cruiser seized the *Vixen* on the plea that she had transgressed some customs regulations, and also that she had landed ammunition for the benefit of the Circassians. The last allegation was positively denied; and, as for the first, it was declared that Russia had no right to impose customs regulations at that part of the coast. The legality of the seizure was discussed in parliament and the newspapers, till most people were convinced that the affair was a mere plot of a few factious men to embroil the two countries; and the subject was dropped at last, without any distinct claim of release being made by the British government. The tone of Russia towards the people who were successfully resisting her may be judged of by the wording of a letter from the invading general, Williamineff, to the patriot chiefs. Copies were taken, and the letter was read with a painful kind of amusement throughout Europe: 'Are you not aware that, if the heavens should fall, Russia could prop them with her bayonets? The English may be good mechanics and artisans, but power dwells only with Russia. No country ever waged successful war against her. Russia is the most powerful of all nations. If you desire peace, you must be convinced that there are but two powers in existence—God in heaven, and

the emperor upon earth.' Meantime, the emperor began to see his way into Persian politics. He was appointed arbiter about a question of succession to the Persian throne; and though the decision was in this case made prematurely by death—the intended heir having died before his father—the idea of Russian intervention was introduced, and thus—as the enemies of Russia did not fail to observe—a step was gained in the advance upon British India.

Nowhere did the despot's hand press more heavily than upon Cracow. By the Vienna Congress, Cracow, with its small territory, had been declared a free state, under the protection of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, who were bound by the strongest terms to respect its independence, while stipulating that deserters and outlaws from their respective countries should be delivered up on demand of the governments. Some Poles and other refugees had settled in Cracow; some were married, and had lived there for several years. On the emperor's saint's day, expressions were uttered which, reaching his ear, did not please him. His wrath, into which he drew Austria and Prussia, fell like a thunderbolt upon the city. A complete clearance of Cracow from all liberal refugees within eight days was ordered; and cruel as was the order, it was enforced by the troops of the three powers taking possession of the city which they had guaranteed from the entrance of any armed force. The scene of the expulsion was dreadful: when it was over, 2000 of the Austrian troops remained; and presently, the exemplary and religious guardians of the liberty of Cracow began to remodel its institutions, according to their own notions. They dismissed the militia; excluded foreigners and foreign publications; established a truly Russian censorship of the press; ordained the support of the Greek Church by the state; and dismissed the diet—postponing indefinitely its next meeting. It is difficult to write these facts without comment, but any comment would weaken their operation. It is difficult to endure the sight, through the eye of the mind, of the anguish and rage of the citizens under this oppression of unsurpassed profligacy, without some endeavour to express their feelings for them; but, in the sobriety of the spirit of history, we must let facts speak for themselves

that can speak as these do, and thus appoint Nicholas of Russia his own historian.

It was not the Emperor Francis I. of Austria who acted with Nicholas in this matter. The Emperor Francis—the good, the paternal, who stroked the heads of children in the streets, and shut up the noblest men of his dominions at Spielberg, and prayed for them while there, and starved them with cold and hunger, and tortured their feelings, and turned their brains, and was so good as to let this be known by permitting Silvio Pellico to tell his story through the press, in order that foolish and troublesome people might be deterred from a rebellion which would cost them so dear—this 'gospel' ruler died in March 1835, after a reign of forty-three years. It was said that he left his empire as safe and prosperous as he found it. It might be as prosperous, but time alone could show whether it was as safe. Time has shown that it was not so. The astute Metternich remained at the helm of the state; and it was thought that the notorious imbecility of the new emperor would not matter, while his minister's ability was available. But Metternich was old, and though able, he was not wise. The wisdom of despots is never more than a temporary shift; and temporary shifts are of very short date indeed in our age of the world, and in prospect of a war of opinion in Europe. Before three years were over, we find Metternich threatening war with Switzerland on account of the refugees harboured in her free states, and provoking a religious quarrel which a really wise statesman would have gone a long way round to avoid. But of that we shall have to speak briefly under our next head. Meantime, it may be recorded that the helpless Austrian emperor, Ferdinand I., was crowned at Milan, in September 1838—the iron crown being placed upon his wretched head, on which sat the fate which mocked at the temporary shift. There was an astonishing environment of barbaric splendour, such as might catch the eye of the foolish sovereign, and the foolish among his people, and of the Italians, who were not truly his people; but in the midst sat the fate which decreed that the puppet emperor should be released from his vain show of sovereignty in a few years, when a sovereignty must be either nothing, or

something better than a vain show. There is nothing more to tell of his or any rule in Italy during this period. It was elsewhere that the patriots of Italy were preparing for their part in the European war of opinion; and on her soil there was nothing more remarkable than the ravages of cholera, and the horrors which grew out of the ignorant consternation of the people, who believed that the plague was the work, or rather the malignant sport, of the doctors and their tools among the tradesmen.

The new king, Ernest of Hanover, lost no time in proving himself a true brother of the craft of statesmanship of which Nicholas of Russia was the present head. He fulfilled all the expectations of Colonel Fairman and the Orange peers of England and Scotland. During the reigns of his two brothers, it had become a common story in England how well the Hanoverians had gone on under the Duke of Cambridge and others who presided, and how suddenly everything was tumult when the Duke of Cumberland arrived. And so it was now. In his pure and pathetic love for his people—of which he spoke with tender earnestness on every occasion of oppression—he set them by the ears together in the shortest possible time. He arrived in his capital on the 28th of June 1837, and on the 8th of July announced in his letters-patent his intention of setting aside the constitution of Hanover. He had prorogued the Assembly of Estates—the Hanoverian parliament—immediately on his arrival. In November he dissolved it, and annulled the constitution, of his own will and pleasure, declaring that it had never been valid. It was not to be expected that everybody would agree in this. Among others, seven professors of the University of Göttingen refused to proceed with the election of a representative, while the constitution was suspended. All the seven were immediately displaced by the king, and three of them banished. Then followed riots at Göttingen, as might be expected. The students left the lecture-rooms, and escorted their exiled professors over the frontier. The king wanted to make out that the seven recusants were condemned by the other authorities of the university; and immediately six more professors came forward to declare their sympathy with the exiles. The military scoured the

streets; but when they had made all quiet for the moment, the business was not over. The smaller states of Germany were alarmed and angry at the king's proceedings. Baden first protested against them, as in violation of the federal league of Germany; and Bavaria and Saxony followed the example of Baden. The Hanoverians are understood to have agreed to use no violence, and to keep their tempers while guarding their liberties. The king was old, and too bad to mend; they would keep him in check, and wait for a new reign. So the adverse parties blundered on, the king making no progress with his new constitution, while his people declared the old one to be in force. In June 1838, the assembly voted down the new constitution, and the king prorogued the assembly. The affair now came before the Germanic Diet at Frankfort, and was discussed, as a matter affecting every one of them, by various states; and Würtemberg declared that the act of the King of Hanover affected the legal condition of all Germany. In the next year, King Ernest declared that he had withdrawn his proposed constitution, and that that of 1819 continued in force; but the chambers voted down the constitution of 1819, and were prorogued for two months. The Germanic Diet, however, voted the validity of that constitution; and thus satisfied all parties as to the soundness of the basis on which affairs rested, while all were deliberating as to what should be done next. In 1840, the king offered a constitution which contained almost everything specified by the chambers. A deputation from the assembly waited on him to express gratitude and joy; and he declared that their kind words made him feel as if a stone were taken from his heart. He had by this time found that governing people who had their own ideas, as he had his, was a less easy and smooth affair than he and his adherents had imagined, when Colonel Fairman proposed to include the British Isles under his sovereignty.

He must have wondered greatly at the King of Denmark for having spontaneously offered to his people something in the shape of a parliament. The Danes had suffered so much, in ancient times, from the oppressions of the aristocracy, that they had, two centuries before, besought their king, Frederick III., to take all power into his own

hands; and Denmark had been under despotic government ever since. Now, in 1835, the king had declared his desire to be assisted by the co-operation of his subjects, and enlightened by a knowledge of their wishes. He did not propose to alter the constitution with which the nation appeared to have been satisfied for nearly two centuries; but he proposed to add to it some regulations for the advancement of popular interests. The people were to elect representatives, who should meet at stated periods to discuss affairs, and declare an opinion, for the king's guidance, preparatory to the framing of his decrees. The elections were to be direct, and the electoral terms were liberal. This movement of the King of Denmark may be regarded as one of the most remarkable signs of the times.

There was a good deal of disputing, during this period, between the ill-assorted pair—Sweden and Norway. The feudal, aristocratic Sweden was haughty, and treated sturdy, democratic Norway in a way she did not choose to put up with. The dispute was about the Norwegian flag, and the commerce which should be conducted under it—Sweden so acting as to give the world to understand that there was no Norwegian flag and commerce except as included under those of Sweden. In 1838, Norway obtained much of what she desired by a concession of the king's—that her vessels should carry the Norwegian instead of the union flag, when south of Cape Finisterre, and in other remote parts. The unfortunate prince, through whose conduct and misfortunes Sweden had lost her provinces of Pomerania and Finland, and gained her new constitution and peace with Russia—the deposed Gustavus Adolphus IV.—died in Switzerland, in February 1837. Another of the determined enemies of Napoleon's person and policy was thus withdrawn; and the great soldier's reign seemed thrown back yet further into the past. It was the horror of Gustavus IV. at the murder of the Duke d'Enghien which mainly determined his own fate and that of the kingdom of Sweden. His latter days were passed in poverty, as well as exile, from his resolute determination to accept of no assistance from any quarter.

The disputes between Holland and Belgium, sometimes

suspended for a term, were renewed with great vehemence, from the king of Holland having cut some wood in the territory of Luxembourg—the possession of which was now the main cause of dispute. In 1832, Belgium agreed to the terms proposed by arbitrators; but Holland stood out. Now, in 1838, Holland was willing to agree; but Belgium refused—declaring that a delay of six years justified a rejection of terms which were agreed to only for the sake of immediate peace. It was evident, however, that Belgium would have to yield; and meantime, it was both amusing and painful to travellers to see how the village tone of spite and rivalry subsisted, unsoftened by time, among the merchants of Rotterdam and Antwerp. In 1835, the Belgian government found itself driven, by popular fears and discontents, to an act of great impolicy, whose utter fruitlessness was presently apparent. The duties on foreign cottons were raised, on the demand of the operatives of Ghent, to a point which encouraged smuggling to a destructive extent. In the next year, an act was passed establishing municipal institutions for all the towns and districts. This was nothing new; such institutions having subsisted before, but, since the separation from Holland, in a state which required regulation. The new act gave more power to the government in the appointment of officers than it had before; but this loss of some popular rights was felt to be more than compensated for by the provisions for the better ascertainment and working of the rest.

The remaining class of troubles and prognostics is that in which religious liberties are concerned, either alone or in complication with political questions. The new cluster of associates called, in 1835, 'Young Germany,' or 'Young Literature,' was the especial horror of the old-fashioned rulers of Europe. Its members—who were denounced in the established language of reprobation, as deists, atheists, democrats, debauchees—men bent on destroying religion, morality, and society—but who might, if asked, have given a somewhat different account of their views and objects—had withdrawn into France and Belgium, and thence sent forth their writings. All the governments presently agreed to use all the means in their power to

prevent the publication and circulation of the works of Young Germany; but, as long experience has proved, it is not in the power of governments to coerce the press effectually; and the proscribed works continued to be written, printed, and read. The next attempt, in 1836, was to prevent the writers passing from one state into another; and the Germanic Diet adopted resolutions for this object which brought them into collision with the legislatures of the respective states, as unwisely as their previous action against the liberty of the press. The Swiss Directory was peremptorily required to deliver up the members of the Young Germany Clubs, or to coerce them · and a disagreement among the cantons as to how far they would admit these demands of foreign governments was one cause of the trouble and dissensions which agitated Switzerland during this period.

The troubles of Switzerland were too many and too intricate to be followed out here. We can do little more than remark that religion was implicated with most of them. One serious quarrel with France was on account of the conduct of the grand-council of Basel in breaking through a contract, on the ground of the religion of the purchaser of an estate. A French banker had purchased an estate, and paid for it; but when the Basel authorities heard that he was a Jew, they annulled the contract. France considered this a breach of treaty, and threatened war. Out of this grew more bigotry, and further disputes; and several times it appeared impossible that peace could be preserved. The Catholic and Protestant cantons were also becoming discontented with each other, and the Protestant and Catholic parties within the particular cantons. When it became clear that something must be done, opinions were taken as to the policy of revising the federal settlement; a measure which was favoured by some and opposed by others. While this was under discussion, Prince Louis Napoleon returned from America, and pursued other objects than attending the death-bed of his mother. With a selfishness as remarkable as his folly, he at once embroiled Switzerland with France. He had obtained citizenship in Thurgau; and the inhabitants were therefore implicated in his

quarrel, as they could not admit that a citizen of their state could be ordered away on the command of a foreign government. The prince allowed the passions of both parties to become exasperated on his account, and even permitted the affair to proceed so far as that the French ambassador was ordered to demand his passports, before he withdrew himself from the hospitality which he was enjoying at the expense of the peace of nations. It remains inexplicable what this prince imagined he had to give that could compensate to the French people and their neighbours for the mischiefs that he was perpetually devising, and the tumults that he was endeavouring to draw them into.

The Austrian government in the same year committed a more daring outrage on the rights of conscience than could have been supposed possible in the age in which we live. In the Ziller Valley, in the Tyrol, lived some people—under 500 in number—who had become Protestants some dozen years before, and who practised their religion in peace and quiet in their mountain retreat. They were warned by government that they must not stay there, unless they joined the Catholic Church, but they might repair to any Protestant part of the empire. They clung to their mountain-home; and a denial of civil rights was next resorted to. They were persecuted with every kind of social vexation that could be inflicted, and forbidden to practise their religion. Their churches were closed, and their every act watched and made painful; till, worn out at length, they prayed for permission to emigrate into Prussia; which was exactly what Metternich wanted. The Prussian government invited them to settle in Silesia; and there they went, the exhausted and indignant victims of a religious persecution which has disgraced our age.

The Prussian government was meantime a sinner in the same direction. The King of Prussia actually attempted to bring together the two fiercely opposed parties in Silesia—the Lutherans and the Reformed—by amalgamating their modes of worship. The Lutherans objected, and opposed some of their clergy who would have enforced the union. The government insisted that the

union was voluntary; but the people did not find it so in practice. They soon saw their pastors deprived; and they refused to admit successors. Then ensued a struggle for the pulpits, and the calling in of the soldiery to quell disturbance; and all the other painful experience of rulers who try to coerce consciences, ending with an extensive emigration of the Lutherans to Australia and elsewhere. Then, there was the quarrel between the Prussian government and the Catholic Church—the grave dispute whether, under the concordat of 1821, the Church was or was not independent of the government. The occasions which were sure to arise presented themselves in 1837, and related to marriages between Catholics and Protestants, and to the doctrines of Professor Hermes. The Catholic clergy were beginning to object to the mixed marriages which they had hitherto sanctioned; and they revived a forgotten decree of the Council of Trent as their authority. The Prussian government obtained from Pope Pius VIII. a dispensation from this decree; but so ambiguously worded as to be of little use. The Archbishop of Cologne made use of this to set aside the brief, and required a pledge from the parties married that the children should be brought up in the Catholic faith. The government arrested the archbishop; the existing pope, Gregory XVI., supported him; the clergy supported the archbishop; and the soldiery fulfilled the commands of the king; and Protestants and Catholics went on intermarrying—some Protestants pledging themselves that the children should be brought up in the Catholic faith, and others relying on the royal promise of protection against the displeasure of pope and priest. The other affair was old-fashioned enough—the proscription and persecution of a book and its author. The archbishop required of the clergy to refuse absolution to all who attended the lectures of Professor Hermes and his followers at the University of Bonn; and the king, who thought this was going too far, required the prelate to abdicate, which he refused to do. He therefore remained a prisoner of state, and the King of Prussia was left in the midst of an open quarrel with the pope and the clergy

In Hesse-Cassel there was a religious disturbance too. The multitude were told that the sect of the Pietists were not only opposed to human learning for themselves, but were trying to keep knowledge from the people; and they forthwith broke the windows of the Pietists, and made so much disturbance as to cause the muster of all the forces of the state. It was plain enough that they were in want of more knowledge—whether the Pietists desired or not to keep it from them.

The Hungarians, whose lot has since become so interesting, were already astir. In 1837, district diets were meeting, to consult about reforms, among which they demanded of the Austrian government the substitution of the Hungarian for the Latin language, in all public acts; and the removal of the Jesuits from the direction of public instruction. Since that day the Hungarian nation has been industriously preparing itself for that liberty—that independence of Austria—for which it appealed to arms in 1848.

It appears from this review that the European war of opinion had already begun in some slight skirmishes, which showed that the forces of the east and the west were mustering on the field, or hastening towards it. The young Queen Victoria and her people might be quiet at home; for no despotism threatened them, and for them liberty was achieved to that point which rendered certain the attainment of more, as it should be wanted. With them, all was as safe as social affairs can be in an age when they are but imperfectly understood; and if the sovereign and nation looked abroad over the great future battle-field, it was for instruction and from sympathy, and not from any reasons of personal hope or fear.

CHAPTER XII.

Canada—Lord Durham—Sketch of Canada as a British Colony—The Assembly of the Council—Stoppage of Official Salaries—Canada Resolutions — Rebellion — Gosford Commission — Constitution of Lower Canada suspended—Lord Durham's Offices—His Powers—Executive Council—State of the Canadas—Speedy Improvements—Scheme of Federal Union of Colonies—Disposal of Prisoners—Ordinance of the 28th of June—Approval at Home—Attacks by Opposition—Lord Brougham's Declaratory Bill—Ministers succumb—Confused Result—Disallowance of the Ordinance—Retirement of Lord Glenelg—Reception of the News in Canada—Necessity of Resignation—The Prisoners—Proclamation—Report—Return of the Commission—Incidents—Lord Durham's Decline and Death—His Character—Mr. Charles Buller—Lord Sydenham (Mr. C. Poulett Thomson)—Responsible Government — Union of the Canadas—Death of Lord Sydenham—His Character.

It is necessary now to review a portion of our history which all parties might be too happy to pass over, if only it were possible. But it is impossible; not only because the stern spirit of history will have everything told that is known, but because the retribution for the incapacity, the presumption, the disregard of constitutional principle, the ignorance, the passion, the cowardice, which were brought out on the one hand or the other, in relation to the affairs of Canada, is not yet exhausted. That the Whig ministers and some members of the opposition of that time never have recovered, and never can recover, from the disgrace of that group of transactions, is merely a minor consequence of what they did. It is a more serious matter that our colonial relations received a deeper injury than a long course of excellent government could repair. For various reasons, the story must be told as briefly and as nearly without comment as possible.

It will be remembered that circumstances arose at the Grey banquet, at Edinburgh, in the autumn of 1834, that gave hope to the weary and disappointed reform party of a revival of their cause. Lord Brougham there was under-

stood to preach a halting reform doctrine, bringing out Lord Durham to assert a doctrine of unhalting reform, amidst the cheers of the assemblage, and the thanks and sympathy of such official men as were present. It will be remembered that, according to the challenge given by Lord Brougham, the controversy was to be renewed in the House of Lords, and that the prospect of this debate and antagonism was understood to be displeasing, if not alarming, to the king; and the supposition was confirmed by the determined exclusion of Lord Brougham from office, first, by the re-establishment of a Conservative ministry, and then, on the return of the Whigs, by the putting the great seal in commission—while Lord Durham was sent ambassador to Russia in time to prevent the proposed encounter, and remained there till the spring of 1837. It will be remembered also with how much difficulty the radical reform members in the House of Commons continued their support to the Melbourne ministry, through its never-ending and most humbling displays of incapacity and unfitness for the time. We have seen how, so late as the accession of the queen, in the summer of 1837—so late as the termination of the elections consequent on that event, in October of the same year—there was every desire to support any administration which made any profession of reform, if only the government would show enough sincerity to preserve its own existence. The difficult and doubtful alliance was preserved chiefly by the knowledge that such a man as Lord Durham was connected with the government—a man who had shown something of what he could do in his construction of the Reform Bill, and whose declaration against allowing an hour to pass over recognised abuses without an endeavour to reform them, was still sounding in the ears of all true reformers. Some additional vigour was given to the hope of the reformers by the treatment of Lord Durham's name, both by the Whigs in power and those dismissed from power. The first spoke of him as 'imprudent' and 'impracticable'—supporting the charge only by anecdotes which told simply of frankness, honesty, earnestness, and a thorough understanding of principles; and the others, Lord Brougham and his adherents, spoke of Lord Durham

with a rancour and vehemently affected contempt which betrayed both fear and jealousy. It was reasonably supposed by those who heard this kind of detraction, that so perpetual a misconstruction of Lord Durham's words and actions, and so virulent a ridicule of his actual foibles, must proceed from some expectation that Lord Durham was likely to become a man of high importance to that political party which had given up all hope from Lord Brougham. The difficult and doubtful alliance of parties which was, in a manner, preserved over the elections of the autumn of 1837, was, however, dissolved before the expiration of the year. The chief organ of the radical reformers declared, in January 1838: 'The ministers are now understood. The alliance between them and the Radicals is broken, never more to be reunited.' The reason of this was that the affairs of Canada had come to a crisis; that that all-important colony was now to be lost or won; and that the ministers were treating the question with an ignorance, and indifference to the rights of the colonists, and to the principles of political liberty, which drove into opposition all who at once cared for political liberties and understood the circumstances of the case. The case was briefly this:—

Canada became a British possession in 1763. Its population then was about 70,000. It was governed under old French law, which disappeared in France at the Revolution; and the enjoyment of their customs, as well as their rights, was guaranteed to the people on their becoming British subjects. They fell into some British notions and ways, however, amidst their entire content under British rule; and by 1774 they were ready for a more regular organisation of government. This was effected by the Quebec Act of that year, by which a council was appointed, to assist the governor, and to have, with him, legislative powers in all matters except taxation. But, ready as the Canadians were to grow into British ways of thinking and acting, the happy process was stopped by the statesmen at home, who thought that by being kept as French as possible, they might be preserved from striving after that independence for which the American colonies south of the St. Lawrence were

struggling. By the Quebec Act, the French civil law was re-established, and the English criminal law alone remained. For several years after this, English merchants and others became residents in Quebec and Montreal, and, towards the end of the century, those emigrants obtained—what the French residents had not thought about—a legislature like that at home. There was a house of representatives, elected by forty-shilling freeholders; and a council appointed by the crown, wherein office was held for life, and might be made hereditary, at the pleasure of the crown. The French inhabitants were alarmed at the idea of the power that would thus be given to the British residents; and they declared themselves perfectly happy under the Quebec Act, and averse to any change. The dangers that they pointed out—dangers to their religion and to the public peace, in case of the British getting the upper hand—appeared so probable, that government decided to divide the province, drawing the line along the boundary of the French settlements. The country to the west was to be purely British, while the French were to keep themselves as unchanged as they pleased. The government had no misgiving about this in 1791, when the thing was done; but Mr. Fox foresaw the mischief that might arise, and gave emphatic warning of it. For many years, his warnings went for nothing, for the colony was contented, and the scheme of division appeared to work well. The French took little interest in politics, and did not even watch over the liberties given them by their own institutions. Both races were extremely loyal, and they fought well for Britain in the second American war.

It was the era which brought peace to us that introduced the elements of strife into Canada. After the peace of 1815, there was a great emigration into Canada. Many thousands of men disengaged from the war having now to settle down in a home, a considerable number went to Canada; and among these were some who were disappointed at finding a less fair field for exertion than they had expected. In Lower Canada, French laws and customs were in their way; and in the Upper Province, there was a sort of aristocracy of the strong loyalists who

hated their neighbours of the United States—having themselves come to Canada, rather than live under the union. On the other hand, these loyalists were not at all pleased at the competition set up by the new-comers; and the French in the Lower Province were alarmed at the arrival of so many British as threatened to swamp their race and interests in no long time. These French formed the first political opposition ever known in Canada; and in the Upper Province, there was presently an opposition too—only, it consisted, not of the old residents, but of the new-comers.

All this was clearly a simple process of advance from colonial infancy to a less dependent and more stirring condition; and government showed that it thought so, by requiring the colony to bear more than hitherto of its expenses. All possible care should have been taken at home to render the long transition which had now begun as easy as it could be made by a spirit of justice and watchful superintending care, while the young colony was trying its powers. Instead of this, and wholly by the fault of the imperial government, an opposition was now permitted to arise between the executive and legislature, such as is considered a fatal circumstance at home when it is the work of a Stuart—a circumstance so fatal as to justify the armed resistance of a Hampden and a Cromwell. As long as it was possible, the Canadian executive went on in its own way, strengthening its power by enlarging its patronage, and disregarding the fruitless complaints of the assembly; but when the assembly proceeded to try whether or not it had any power —whether it was a reality or a mockery—when it began to pass measures to weaken the other branch or to strengthen its own, the government interposed with an act worthy only of the Stuarts. The legislative council was composed of Tories, who would be sure to contravene the proceedings of the assembly. From that time, the struggle between the branches of the government in Canada became disgraceful to the mother-country which had permitted it. Each party was as provoking as possible to the other; but every one must see that the assembly was the party most to be considered and pitied.

It represented the large majority of the inhabitants of both provinces, who found themselves not only excluded from office and influence, but unable to get any good measure passed—as every popular measure was, as a matter of course, thrown out by the council. Under these circumstances, the assembly of the Lower Province stopped the supplies for the payment of official salaries in 1833; and the Upper Province followed the example in 1836. The demands which they thus enforced were different in the two provinces—the Upper requiring that the executive council should be made responsible to the assembly—and the Lower, that the legislative council should be made elective. This last demand was in accordance with the opinion of Mr. Fox, given forty years before, in a speech which had prophesied the evils that in fact had arisen; but it was solemnly refused by the imperial legislature in the form of an assent, by an overpowering majority, to the resolutions proposed by Lord John Russell on the 6th of March 1837. The division took place on the 14th of April, when the minister was supported by a majority of 269 to 46.

The Lower Canadians were only roused by this. They supposed the British government to be ignorant of the state of the case; and this ignorance might be dispelled by a troublesome perseverance in demands. At any rate, whatever had been obtained from the government during a long course of years, had been gained by means of incessant demands, and of dogged refusal of everything that it was in their power to refuse till their demands were granted. Those rulers have much to answer for who teach any people such a lesson as this; yet Lord John Russell saw so little into the culpability of the government as to declare, in the speech which alienated his best supporters, that the government of Canada had been one long course of concessions. The government of a growing colony ought always to be a long course of concessions; and if the government be bad, the difference is that the concessions are less advantageous, from being extorted, than they would have been if made for better reasons.

The rage excited in Canada by the news of the decision

of the House of Commons was extreme. Threats of armed resistance flew abroad over the country; and with them newspapers filled with seditious articles, expressed with the vehemence common in the political literature of all colonies. Government did not venture to bring the authors to trial, knowing that the juries would acquit. As far as anybody knew, nothing was done, from month to month, to redress the grievances complained of by the assembly; and the people were exasperated beyond control. Two persons arrested for sedition were rescued, on the impulse of the moment, by some armed peasants. The spark was struck among the gunpowder, and the explosion immediately followed. The French population rose as one man, and in December 1837, the news arrived in London that Canada was in a state of rebellion.

The government insisted that means of redress had been afforded by the sending out, in 1835, of Lord Gosford, with commissioners, to inquire into the grievances of the Canadians; but that commission had made matters worse instead of better, by baulking the hopes of the people—by promising great things, and hinting of liberal instructions which came to nothing but causing imputations of deception, if not of treachery, against Lord Glenelg, the colonial minister. Lord Gosford now, on the breaking out of the rebellion, came home, resigning the government into the hands of Sir J. Colborne, as a military governor, best suited to the exigency of the time. Here, then, was the state of things; the governor and his council in close union with each other, and in hopeless hostility to the popular branch of the legislature; the legislature retaliating its wrongs, and seeking redress, by refusing the official salaries, and demanding from the imperial government a necessary amendment of the constitution; and the imperial government refusing the amendment, and merely proposing to improve the quality of the obnoxious council, without touching its principle. Such was the state of affairs in Lower Canada. In the Upper Province it was much the same; only, instead of a parliamentary refusal of the popular demand, the same end was gained by the putting forth of such government patronage as made the assembly its own —a temporary and most dangerous device of procrastination.

The numbers in the legislature had before been forty reformers and twenty Tories: after the elections of June 1836, when the governor put forth all his power and patronage, the numbers were forty-one Tories to twenty reformers—a change which, occurring in a time of vehement popular discontent, tells its own tale.

In this state of affairs, what the ministers did was to propose to parliament a suspension of the constitution of Lower Canada. They had suspended the constitution before, in the preceding April, by taking the disposal of their funds out of the hands of the assembly. This was all they had done; and now they were for suspending more of the constitution, when some of the wisest people of every political party in the country considered the cause of the Canadians to be just; their demands such as could not be trifled with; and even the war they were now levying to be defensible as regarded England, though unjustifiable as regarded the neighbours of the insurgents, from its hopelessness and unprepared character. When, in such a state of things, a member of the house of Russell stood forth, as a minister of the crown, to coerce instead of aiding the injured—to call that treason in them which he lauded as patriotism in analogous instances, the thorough reformers in parliament and the country felt that it was time to part company with the nominal reformers who had been practising a Stuart policy, and were now taking a Stuart view of affairs. Upon this occasion it was that the organ of the reformers declared: 'The ministers are now understood. The alliance between them and the Radicals is broken, never more to be reunited.'

As for the revolt—it was put down at once, and with little difficulty. In three weeks, all was quiet. It was not long before the friends of good government, and the advocates of the preservation of our colonial dominion, began to be glad that the rebellion had happened, as it had certainly roused the government to a sense that something must be done. The tone of Lord John Russell, who led in the Commons, was hard, prejudiced, despotic—full of the arrogance which those are most apt to parade who have brought on a crisis by ignorance or carelessness. He spoke as if the Canadians were purely wilful and un-

grateful, and not at all as if they were suffering under protracted misgovernment which they could not get rectified; but he now saw that something must be done He had suspended a part of their constitution before, in defiance, and as a punishment; and he suspended the rest now, but it was with a view to something beyond. A full inquiry was to be made into Canadian affairs on the spot, with a view to practical measures. Under the stimulus of rebellion, it was probable that something would be done. Whether something good would be done, must mainly depend on the choice of the man who was sent.

It was on the 16th of January that Lord John Russell told the House of Commons who it was that was to be sent. 'I think it is most important,' he said, 'that the person to be sent from this country should be one whose conduct and character should be beyond exception—a person conversant not solely with matters of administration, but with the most important affairs which are from time to time brought before the parliament of this country. I think he should be conversant also with the affairs of the various states of Europe; and, moreover, that it should be implied by his nomination that he was not at all adverse to opinions the most liberal, and that he was favourable to popular feelings and popular rights. Having said this much, I know not why I should refrain from adding that her majesty has been pleased to intrust the conduct of this affair and these high powers to one whom her advisers think in every respect fitted for the charge—namely, the Earl of Durham.' Lord Durham felt 'inexpressible reluctance' to the charge. His health was not good; and no post ever filled by any man more absolutely required the unflinching energy and strong capacity for labour which cannot be permanently commanded in a state of uncertain health. With his well-known pride of family and high spirit, there was united a genuine modesty, which prevented his ever overrating his own powers, and a good sense which disclosed to him all the real difficulties of any task which he undertook. It was no wonder, therefore, that he went reluctantly into a work like this—so critical, so arduous, so incalculably important. The work was nothing less than reorganising society in Canada, and mainly determining the colonial

relations of England for all time to come. His spirit warmed as he dwelt upon the significance of the effort he was now to make; and before he left England he was able to preach a cheerful faith to some who saw but too much to apprehend for him. It is very affecting now to read his appeal to friends and foes, on the announcement to the Lords of his acceptance of the mission—an appeal which it must be more than affecting to both friends and foes to remember now. 'I feel,' he said, 'that I can accomplish it only by the cordial and energetic support—a support which I am sure I shall obtain—of my noble friends the members of her majesty's cabinet, by the co-operation of the imperial parliament, and, permit me to say, by the generous forbearance of the noble Lords opposite, to whom I have always been politically opposed.' He alluded to the 'candour and generosity' of the Duke of Wellington, and on these he knew he might rely; but, as for 'cordial and energetic support' from his friends in the cabinet, and 'generous forbearance' from some who sat opposite, it was more worthy of his confiding temper to depend upon them than consistent with their conduct in political affairs to grant them.

Lord Durham's appointment was twofold. He went out as governor-general of the five British colonies in North America, and also as lord high-commissioner, to inquire into, and, if possible, adjust, all questions about civil government pending in Upper and Lower Canada. His powers were understood to be unlimited; and that of granting a general amnesty, being expressly mentioned by ministers in parliament, was eagerly discussed in Canada, from the first moment that the news could arrive. By a letter from the colonial secretary, dated April 21, Lord Durham was informed that her majesty's government were anxious above everything that the prisoners concerned in the insurrection, who could not be tried in the ordinary courts of law, because it was certain that juries would not convict, should be treated with the utmost possible lenity, compatible with the public safety; and, to secure the immediate settlement of the question which the whole government saw to be 'by far the most difficult and dangerous'—that of the disposal of the prisoners—the unusual power was

given to Lord Durham to bestow absolute pardon, in treason cases as in others, without waiting for the ascertainment of the royal pleasure. When these powers were bestowed, and sympathy and cordial support promised, no doubt the ministers meant what they said. They were as little able as others to imagine how soon they could be scared into desertion and betrayal of the comrade whom they had entreated to undertake 'the most difficult and dangerous' part of their business.

Before he sailed, Lord Durham had warning how much he had to expect from the 'generous forbearance' of political opponents. Owing to some unfortunate delays in the going forth of the expedition, time was given for factious opponents to find means of annoyance. Ridicule was cast on Lord Durham's preparations—even to the packing of his plate, and the number of his grooms; and jocose warning was conveyed to relatives of gentlemen going out, that the ship-of-war, the *Hastings*, would be sunk by the weight of the governor-general's plate: and so much noise did this nonsense make, that the Marquis of Chandos nearly succeeded in throwing over the whole enterprise, by moving an objection to the expense—the governor-general being himself unsalaried. A serious mistake, made by Lord Durham and the ministers, afforded advantage to their enemies, both now and hereafter. Two objectionable persons—convicted of crime, one in a court of justice, and the other at the bar of the Lords, some years before—went out with the expedition; one with an appointment, and the other without, but with a full understanding that he was to be employed for the purposes of the mission. The ministers acquiesced in Mr. Turton's appointment, before Lord Durham's departure, though they were afterwards forward in censuring him for it. The appointment was, in truth, a bad one; and no eminence of legal ability should have been allowed to cancel the moral disability.

The voyage was long; and its leisure was employed by the governor-general and his official companions in diligent study of Canadian questions, and in discussions on the mass of papers relating to those questions that they had brought from the colonial office. The Quebec papers

which were sent on board at the mouth of the St. Lawrence contained bad news. There were faction and fury in the towns, and an outcry against any despotic governor-general: the French population were believed to be planning mischief; and the American 'sympathisers' on the borders were giving more and more trouble. The first step was to prepare a proclamation, which was done on board. The next was so characteristic as to be worth mentioning. It was the custom, on the arrival of a new governor, to swear in the old executive council. Lord Durham did not intend to do this, being aware of the thoroughly party character, and therefore present helplessness, of the late executive council; but the thing was very nearly done by an audacious attempt of the clerk of the council to surprise Lord Durham into swearing in the old members. To break up the notion that office in the council was for life, Lord Durham selected a few quiet new members, with whom he joined his three secretaries.

When he landed—on the 29th of May 1838—the British received him with eagerness, expecting from his hand the annihilation of the French party. The French were dumb and disaffected, sullenly withholding their confidence from their own priests, because the priests were well affected to the government. The late official body was quite odious and helpless. Upper Canada was in a most alarming state. Sir Francis Head, the governor, and others, had cruelly insulted the Americans; the American 'sympathisers' retaliated by attacking steam-boats, and keeping up a small war along the borders, which the government at Washington was wholly unable to control. From the bad state of municipal arrangements, the towns were in a barbarous condition as to police, paving, and lighting; and nothing could be worse than the state of public feeling about the administration of justice, both on a large and a small scale. From radical faults in the method of selling crown-lands, insuperable impediments existed to the proper settling of the country, and the distribution of emigrants westwards; a mischief as fatal to the prosperity of the colony as its political troubles. The canals, indispensable for commerce, which would otherwise find its way through the United States, were left unfinished; and no representations made

to government at home about the necessity of completing them obtained any attention. Some of the old tenures of land were vexatious and detrimental, and there was no registration of land. Education was in a backward state; though among the French population, virtuous efforts had been made for the instruction of their children. What the spirit of rancour was between the two races and political parties, there is no need to repeat.

Such was the state of things when Lord Durham landed at Quebec on the 29th of May. Within a few weeks there was a great change. It used to be said of Lord Durham in his foreign missions, that a week or so was spent first in making potentates understand that he meant exactly what he said, and nothing else; and that from that time business proceeded rapidly, smoothly, and safely. He used the same frankness now, and so did his coadjutors; and it was understood by everybody but the government at home. Colonel Grey went to Washington; and immediately all was well there. All danger of war was presently over; and the British and American forces were co-operating on the frontier. The French population, thus deprived of hope from the borderers, settled down in a kind of sullen resignation, and left off plotting rebellion. The British were annoyed that the French were kindly treated, and their loyalty became of a soberer kind. In Upper Canada, Lord Durham persuaded Sir George Arthur to give up all his plans of hanging rebels, and to publish a general amnesty, by which minds were set at rest. Before June was out, provision was made for paving and lighting, and furnishing a good police to Quebec and Montreal. By means of a land commission, a path was opened to colonists, and the most abundant of all sources of colonial prosperity was freely opened up. A good court of appeal was constituted of the judges, with two additional members. By imperial act, the new executive council was made the supreme appellate tribunal. A registry of land-titles was instituted, and a commutation of the feudal tenures of Montreal provided for, as a beginning of a general commutation. An education commission saw its way to the establishment of a general system of education by which the adverse races might be united in schools and colleges,

so that in another generation their present animosity might have become a tradition.

These were not small things to have done in the course of a few weeks; but there were two affairs—one more immediately embarrassing, the other more eminently important, than any of these—which still more deeply engaged the minds of the governor-general and his coadjutors. The permanently important subject was the scheme of constituting a federal union of the British North American provinces, for the two objects of securing good government for these colonies themselves, and of providing a counterbalance to the increasing power of the United States in the western hemisphere. This scheme appears to be one of those whose fulfilment is only a question of time. It has been suggested and re-suggested by statesmen, from Mr. Fox downwards—if not from an earlier date still. Mr. Roebuck introduced it, formally and completely, in the House of Commons, in April 1837; and Sir R. Peel, Lord Howick, Mr. Ellice, and others, declared their approval of it. Lord Durham began immediately to inquire and act—conceiving that no surer means of securing peace in the colonies could be found than uniting their legislation in matters of common interest to them all —such as the conduct of their defence in time of war, post-office and currency matters, and others—while their local affairs were ruled by a legislature in each colony. Sir Charles Grey, who had been one of Lord Gosford's commissioners, had proposed to divide the Canadas into three provinces, with their respective parliaments; by which plan he believed the adverse races would be so separated as to cease to annoy each other, while their representatives might meet in a central parliament, to legislate upon the navigation of the St. Lawrence, their commercial duties, their monetary system, their railroads, canals, and internal communications. Lord Durham was disposed in favour of the large federal system, and of also dividing the Canadas into three provinces—the westernmost of which would be exclusively British; the easternmost French, of a very quiet sort; and the intermediate one containing both populations, but the French in a small minority. The numbers in the two Canadas were at that time

950,000; of which 620,000 were British, and 330,000 were French. By some means or other, the process must be renewed by which the French had been fast becoming British when the act of 1791 separated the races again; and the present scheme appeared the most promising, by its operation in concentrating powers, and swamping dissensions, while it left laws and customs untouched. Lord Durham requested that the colonies under his government would send able persons to Quebec to discuss this subject with his council. On the 12th of September, some gentlemen arrived from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island; and others soon followed from New Brunswick. These gentlemen were well chosen—intelligent, enlightened, and seriously disposed in favour of the scheme. But events were happening which put an end to their deliberations.

The other affair was that which Lord Durham and the ministers had agreed beforehand was 'by far the most difficult and dangerous'—the disposal of the rebel prisoners. Their fate ought to have been decided by Sir J. Colborne, and not left to be an insuperable embarrassment to the governor-general. But the thing had not been done; and it must be done now. It was a subject of deep thought and long deliberation. The case was this. The rebellion had been put down long ago; and it was universally understood that its outbreak was by a sort of accident, though its spread was but too well prepared for by the violence of previous agitation. The jails were full: and the choice of a method of clearing them was rendered infinitely more difficult by delay. To have military tribunals now was out of the question, after such a lapse of time, and in the state of men's minds; and the civil tribunals could not have acted. Convictions could not have been obtained but by a packing of the juries by government—a course not to be thought of. Two members of the council suggested to Lord Durham to punish a few leaders lightly, but steadily, by means of an *ex post facto* law, made to meet the case. Lord Durham foresaw the outcry that would be made; and declared that he would not think of it on any grounds less broad than the wish of the leading loyalists, and the petition of the prisoners

themselves. The leading men among the British made known their approval; and we have the petition of eight rebel leaders, dated from Montreal Jail, June 25, 1838, in which they exhibit their own view of the course which would be best for the peace of the country. 'We professed our willingness to plead guilty,' they say, 'whereby to avoid the necessity of a trial, and to give, as far as is in our power, tranquillity to the country. . . . We again place ourselves at your lordship's discretion, and pray that the peace of the country may not be endangered by a trial.' Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Paget was at Quebec at the time; and with him the plan was discussed and agreed upon.

On the day of the queen's coronation, the 28th of June, an ordinance appeared, which declared that the eight rebel leaders in the jail of Montreal had acknowledged their guilt, and submitted themselves to her majesty's pleasure; that sixteen others, who were named, had fled; that it was hereby enacted, that the eight before-named culprits should be transported to Bermuda, to undergo there such restraints as should be thought fit; and that any of either class of culprits who should return and be found in the province without permission, should suffer death. It was to be in the power of any governor to permit any or all of these persons to return. Another clause excepted from mercy persons concerned in two murders connected with the rebellion. With this ordinance was published a proclamation of amnesty for all political offences, for all persons but those designated in the ordinance.

The success of this measure was complete and immediate. Except that some of the British at Quebec were offended at its leniency, there was nothing but exultation on every hand. It produced a strong impression in the United States; and its instant effect in settling minds, and restoring social confidence in Canada, was very striking. None were better pleased than the prisoners themselves—as might have been expected. Lord Durham had fears throughout that censure would arise at home; but these fears were dissolved as soon as the mails could cross and recross the Atlantic, by the arrival of a dispatch from the colonial minister, and an autograph letter from the queen,

approving of the ordinance and proclamation in the strongest terms.

The worst seemed now over; the past appeared done with, and the way clear for the completion of the reforms in progress. Lord Durham's health, never good, was somewhat impaired by toil and anxiety; but he was now cheered, and had no doubt of finishing his great work. But the past was not done with; for he had omitted to send home to the government a statement full enough to produce in parliament, to meet the questionings and cavils of the uninformed and hostile. The ministers knew enough for their own satisfaction; and he relied on their pledges of cordial support, and on their consciousness of his ample powers—given by themselves; but he ought to have furnished them with such complete documentary exhibitions of the case as would have made them as strong with parliament as he believed himself to be with them. He did not; and it was a fatal omission. Some other matters had not gone smoothly. Lord Melbourne, with all his nonchalance and gaiety, had not spirit, activity, and courage to stand by an absent friend under attack in the House of Lords; and especially when the attack came from Lord Brougham, who now had power at any time to unnerve him. All the ministers were aware of Mr. Turton's intended appointment before he sailed; yet Lord Melbourne gave it up to censure, as if it were a fact new to him, when questioned upon it, on the 2nd of July, by Lord Wharncliffe. Lord Durham did not conceal his feelings on this incident, when he next wrote home. Another attack was made in the Lower House, when Sir Edward Sugden objected to the small number of the governor-general's council; and on this occasion, the arrangement was quietly vindicated by Lord John Russell and the attorney-general. The great attack was made on the 7th of August, by Lord Brougham, who not only offered objections which every member of the legislature had a perfect right, and might consider it his duty, to offer, but pursued his supposed rival in a manner mournful and surprising even to those who knew his temper, and the antecedent circumstances. About the illegality of that part of the ordinance which declared the culprits liable to

death punishment if they returned without leave, there was a widely existing doubt—no trial having taken place; but Lord Brougham also denied that the principal of the eight prisoners had ever acknowledged himself guilty; he set forth a different policy for Canada as the one which he avouched to be right; and he brought in a bill to declare the meaning of the Canada Act, under which Lord Durham went out—proposing therein large limitations of the powers of the governor-general, and offering to indemnify, by act of parliament, all persons concerned in the issue of the ordinance of the 28th of June. Lord Brougham's own bill contained errors which exposed him to some retort; as when it declared the ordinance to be 'so much for the service of the public, that it ought to be justified by act of parliament,' while, in the same breath, Lord Brougham was vehement about its gross and intolerable injustice. The declaration in the bill was vindication enough of the ordinance in a moral point of view, as Lord Glenelg declared; and he avowed his intention of supporting the ordinance as legal in all its parts but one—meeting the consequences of that one, by instructing the governor of Bermuda not to detain the prisoners if they should choose to depart; which every one knew they would be careful not to attempt. Lord Glenelg also pointed out the novelty, in Lord Brougham's bill, of proposing indemnity for a current transaction—that is, for acts future as well as finished. All the generous-minded men, of any politics, were of one mind about the temper shown in the treatment of Lord Durham, and the studious forgetfulness of the singular exigency of his position. Such men felt, that after having given Lord Durham powers almost unlimited for the management of a crisis almost unequalled, and encouraged him to rely on their 'cordial support,' or 'generous forbearance,' as the case might be, it could not be right to pass now—in regard to his very first act of mercy—a bill, called declaratory, but which should materially limit the powers they had so lately conferred. Such men were for rectifying the one supposed illegality of the ordinance, while supporting its intent, and upholding, wherever it was possible, the authority of the governor-general, till the organisation of Canadian affairs

should preclude all doubts as to the field of action for rulers, and release them from the present urgent necessity of support from home. But if the ministers fully understood the case, they did not show that they did. They could not, unfortunately, interest parliament by the production of any documentary narrative or reasoning from the Canadian government; and Lord Brougham's opposition was more than they had courage to stand. Though Lord Melbourne declared, on the 9th of August, that the House was suffering from the narrowing of the mind caused by the pursuit of the legal profession, and that if the Canadas were now lost, through the discrediting and fettering of those who should protect them, it would be by special pleading, he gave way in twenty-four hours. The second reading of Lord Brougham's bill was carried by a majority of 54 to 36. After this, all was in confusion. Lord Denman was disposed to believe that Lord Durham had the power of transporting the prisoners to the Bermudas, though everybody else had given up that point. It came out that Sir J. Colborne had passed ordinances of attainder more stringent than Lord Durham's, without any question from any quarter; and Lord Brougham now refused to declare whether he thought Sir J. Colborne had transcended his powers. Lord Brougham's bill was stripped of all its declaratory portions, and reduced to a mere enacting of indemnity, to which again Lord Denman objected, on the part of the prisoners, as a gross violation of the constitution. Amidst this confusion, absurd if it had not been about a matter so serious, the only party whose views and facts were not fully explained was Lord Durham. He and his position were sacrificed, while nothing was established.

On the 10th of August, Lord Melbourne announced that the queen's advisers had counselled the disallowance of the ordinance. 'I cannot but say,' he declared, 'that it is with the deepest regret and alarm that I have taken this course. I cannot but say that it is not without great apprehensions of the consequences that I have taken this course; and it is not without feeling the greatest pain and regret that I have come to the determination.' In the Commons, the debates on the subject were animated, and

sometimes angry; and the ministers appeared even more weak than in the Lords. On Sir Charles Grey declaring that, while he disapproved of the ordinance in general, he was convinced of the legality of the provision for the transportation to Bermuda, Dr. Lushington observed that Lord Durham might have gone further astray if he had had more legal advice, since the lord chancellor, the lord chief-justice, Ex-chancellor Sugden, Sir William Follett, and Sir Charles Grey, all differed from one another as to the legality of his acts. It was now, however, too late to reconsider the matter. The pledge was given to disallow the ordinance; and it was done in such a hurry that the amnesty provision was not remembered; and it must now include all the parties named as excepted in the ordinance. The step which Lord Durham was compelled instantly to take in consequence of this was converted into another charge against him, as will be seen. As Lord Glenelg had emphatically approved the ordinance, in a dispatch to the governor-general, it was thought necessary that he should retire when the annulling was decreed. He was got rid of, and was succeeded, as colonial secretary, in February 1839, by Lord Normanby.

It was on a fine September day, on returning from a merry drive, that Lord Durham and his family and advisers received the news of the disallowance of the ordinance. His friend and best helper, Mr. Charles Buller, knew before dinner—knew by his countenance more than by words, that all was over—that their great enterprise was ruined. When they sat down in consultation, that adviser and friend would fain have persuaded himself and others that all was not over. That this was the result of an intrigue was to them clear. The ministers and Lord Durham had a deadly enemy, who had given notice of what they might expect when he declared that he 'hurled defiance' at Lord Melbourne's head; and Lord Melbourne and his comrades dared not withstand this enemy even while the first lawyers in the empire disagreed as to whether the ordinance of Lord Durham was legal or illegal. What Sir J. Colborne had done was approved or passed over; and when, in a most critical difficulty which Sir J. Colborne should never have thrown upon him, Lord

Durham used powers which Sir J. Colborne had used without question, his watchful enemy seized his opportunity to scare his friends from supporting him, as they were pledged to do. Considering all this, and that Lord Durham was to blame in not having furnished the government at home with sufficient documentary material for his defence, Mr. Charles Buller earnestly desired to hold out, for the high prize of success in retrieving the colony, and forming a new and sound colonial system. But he soon saw that Lord Durham was right in proposing to return. The governor-general had not health for such a struggle as this must now have been. Energy and decision were not always to be commanded in the degree necessary under such unequalled difficulties; and death in the midst of the work was only too probable. Again, the colony was still in too restive and unsettled a state to be governed by an enfeebled hand; and while unsupported at home, Lord Durham was a less safe ruler than Sir J. Colborne, whom he would leave in his place. Again, it was now clear that the true battle-field on behalf of Canada was in parliament. With his present knowledge in his head, and his matured schemes in his hand, Lord Durham could do more for Canada in the House of Lords than he could do at Quebec, while the Lords made nightly attacks which drew rebuke even from the Duke of Wellington, and thwarted the policy which they did not understand. Thus, resignation was an act of sad and stern necessity; but, if not so, it was an act of clear fidelity to Canada. It was hastened by rumours of intended insurrection, which, under the circumstances, could be dealt with only by Sir J. Colborne.

And now again came the question, what was to be done with the prisoners? The case was at present this. They would return on Lord Durham's resignation. Were they to be tried or not? Having been already more or less punished, were they to be punished over again? The violent loyalists would have arrested them; and then would have ensued the very evils, with aggravation, that the ordinance was designed to obviate. The guilt would have been proved; and acquittal would have followed, in the face of the evidence. There must have been—to avoid such a spectacle as this—a suspension of the habeas corpus,

or packed juries, or martial law; and if Lord Durham would not introduce such measures for the punishment of the rebels at an earlier date, he would not do it now, to repunish a few of them long after the rebellion had ceased. These men were as yet feeble and insignificant—the few against whom there was a sufficiency of evidence; but they would become abundantly formidable if it could once be said in the United States, and around their own homes, that they were persecuted by the British government. This would be made the pretext of the rebellion then brewing; which might otherwise be easily dealt with from its want of pretext. There was also no time to be lost; for the men might now arrive any day. Lord Durham was therefore advised to meet the difficulty half-way—to speak the first word—and to do it by inserting in his needful proclamation a declaration that there was now nothing to prevent the return of the prisoners. Lord Durham himself observed that this would be regarded at home as a freak of temper; but his council encouraged him to brave the imputation, and trust to the facts becoming understood in time. The act *was* called a freak of temper; and so was his determination to return; and so was his proclamation—which is considered by impartial observers one of the finest papers of its kind that our history can show. It was not a case in which there could be any concealment or shuffling. To enlist the colonists on the side of obedience and order, it was necessary to tell them simply why he must leave them—why the rebels whom he had punished were released by the home government—and how it was that the plans for the welfare of the colony were suddenly stopped. It was necessary, for the same purpose, to keep up their hope and trust in government—to show them that all might yet be well if he went home to explain their case—to lead them to rely on him still, as resolved in their cause. The proclamation was issued on the 9th of October; and its immediate effect was to soften the grief and wrath of the colony at losing him—to allay excessive agitation—and to prove that he had not miscalculated the resources of the colony, by bringing forward volunteers, in fresh confidence, for the defence of the province.

He did what he could to obviate to the colony the mischief done by friends and foes at home; and he did so much that he must ever be regarded as the originator of good government in the colonies. Rarely has a greater work been done in five months than the actual reforms he wrought in Canada; but he did much more by means of the report which he delivered after his return. By means of this celebrated report, free and large principles of colonial government are exhibited in action, and endowed with so communicable a character that there are none of our more thriving colonies that do not owe much of their special prosperity to him; and probably few of the least happy that would not have been in a worse condition if he had not gone to Canada. By the utmost diligence in the completion of his measures during the few weeks that remained—by every effort of self-control, and by the quiet operation of his magnanimity—he averted as much as he could of the mischief done at home; but one fatal consequence was beyond his power. His heart was broken. No malice, no indifference, no levity, can get rid of that fact; and it is one which should not be hidden.

He held to his work to the last. On the night before his departure, a proclamation settled the rights of squatters on crown-lands. As he went down to the harbour, crowds stretched as far as the eye could see—every head uncovered, and not a sound but of the carriages. This deep silence of sympathy moved him strongly; and he believed that this was his last sight of an assemblage of men; for he had no idea that he could reach England alive. As the frigate—the *Inconstant*—was slowly towed out of harbour, heavy snow-clouds seemed to sink and settle upon her, while over the water came the sound of the cannon which installed his successor. Those of his council who remained behind, to clear off arrears of business, were alarmed, during their sad and silent dinner, by a report of fire on board the frigate; and a fire there was, but it was presently extinguished. There was no intermission of storms up to the moment of the landing at Plymouth, on the 1st of December. While the ship was in harbour there, the weather was so boisterous that there was difficulty to the queen's messengers in finding any sea-goers who would

undertake to convey on board the *Inconstant* the packet of orders to land Lord Durham without the honours. It was done by a boat being allowed to drive so that the packet could be thrown on board. He met honours in abundance, however, on his landing, and all the way to London—crowded public meetings, addresses, escorts—every token of confidence and attachment that could cheer his heart. There was great joy throughout the Liberal party when his first words at the Devonport meeting were known. They referred to his 'declarations to the people of Scotland in 1834,' as his present creed. But he disappointed the Liberals by his magnanimous determination to devote himself to the retrieval of Canada, and to listen to nothing else till that was effected.

Lady Durham immediately on her return resigned her situation in the queen's household. Great efforts were made to bring about a reconciliation between Lord Durham and the Whig government; and his generosity aided the attempt. He could afford to do it; for he had never spoken evil of his enemies. Nothing had throughout been more touching to those who knew him than his slowness to give up hope in Lord Brougham, and his quickness in seizing on favourable explanations of doubtful conduct. He now required of his friends silence in both Houses about his quarrel; and he kept silence himself.* While the newspapers of all parties were commenting on the weakness of the Whigs, and declaring that they could not remain in power 'beyond Easter at furthest'—a curious hit as to date—Lord Durham devoted himself only the more to the support of a ministry which, with all its sins and weaknesses, professed a liberal policy. He was soon joined by his coadjutors from Canada; and they worked together at the celebrated report. There was more cavil about small circumstances on the publication of the report—worthy of mention only as showing how he was betrayed when he relied on the 'cordial support' of friends and the

* It will be evident to the readers of this chapter that it is written from private knowledge, as well as from public documents. After the above notice of Lord Durham's generous silence, it is hardly necessary to say that no statement of the circumstances of his Canada mission was ever made to me by himself or any of his family.

'generous forbearance' of opponents. Much of his time and labour was devoted to the instruction of his successor, Mr. C. Poulett Thomson (afterwards Lord Sydenham), who wisely resolved to adopt the Durham policy with the utmost completeness. Many hours every day were spent in consultation, and preparation of measures; and to good purpose. Not only were Lord Durham's plans all adopted by Lord Sydenham, but his own best measures were planned in Lord Durham's house in London, prepared for introduction in Canada, and the agents informed and instructed. These duties done, but few months of life remained to the baffled statesman. When he could give information about Canadian matters, or vindicate the principles of good government at home, or in the colonies, he was at his post in the House of Lords. But he was visibly sinking. In the summer of 1840, he was ordered to the south of Europe for his health; but he found himself so ill at Dover that he turned aside to Cowes, where he became too weak to leave his couch. Even then, and when he was unable to take any nourishment but a little fruit, there was so much life and animation in his countenance and conversation, that those who knew him best could not but believe that much work yet lay between him and the grave; but on the 28th of July he sank rapidly, and died in a few hours. He left his large estates and other property as much as possible at the disposal of his devoted wife—the eldest daughter of Earl Grey: but she followed him in a few months, leaving their young son to emulate the virtues of his parents as well as he might after the spectacle of their example was withdrawn.

Thus were the Liberal party in Great Britain deprived of the statesman whom they had hoped to make their head. It may be questioned whether his health or his temperament would have ever permitted him to hold a post in the cabinet for any length of time. He could not, under Lord Grey's premiership; but the shortcomings of that administration are quite enough to account for his secession. The halting reformers were no comrades for him; and his directness, frankness, faith, and courage were altogether overpowering to them. Magnanimous as his nature was,

he had faults of temper which excused some dislike and some ridicule, though that fault was much exaggerated by those who, being able to establish no other charge against him, made the most of that. He had much to bear from the loss of children, and his infirm health; but he never was wanting to the discharge of public duty. From the moment when the young John George Lambton fixed the attention of the best opposition men by his maiden speech, to that in which he provided for the establishment of responsible government in Canada, he was the trust and hope of the most highly principled Liberals in the country. He had good working ability —a clear head, an unprejudiced mind, a ceaseless desire to learn of all who had anything to tell, and a most conscientious industry. It has been said that he had a genius for truth; and so he had—both for the perception and the expression of it. He thought nothing of his own power of public speaking; but some of the best lawyers and literary people in England liked it as well as any election mob that he ever addressed. He died at the age of forty-eight, and left no political successor. If the advent of the Conservatives was before believed to be near, it became pretty certain from the time of Lord Durham's death. There was no longer anything in connection with the Whig administration worth contending for. Lord Durham had upheld it, and thereby enjoined the same conduct on his friends; but when he was gone, no further effort was possible, and the Melbourne ministry remained dependent on the mere favour of the queen.

It has been mentioned that Mr. Charles Buller was the nearest friend and adviser of Lord Durham in his Canadian enterprise. He was his chief-secretary and a member of his council; and it is understood that the merit of the celebrated report is mainly ascribable to him. He was before a remarkable member of the House of Commons—remarkable for high political promise, and for a manly amiability which engaged the friendly regard of every man within the four walls. He was one of the leaders of the radical reform party; but this did not render him an object of suspicion or dislike to the rankest Tory in the House—any more than his overflowing wit made him

feared or avoided. He was but thirty-two when he finished his work at the Canadian report; and every one hoped and supposed that a long course of usefulness and honour lay before him. But in ten years he also was gone, after having risen much in the appreciation of those who knew him most and least. In the words of one who knew and has described him well: 'To a singular extent it can be said of him that he was a spontaneous, clear man. Very gentle, too, though full of fire; simple, brave, graceful. What he did and what he said came from him as light from a luminous body; and had thus always in it a high and rare merit, which any of the more discerning could appreciate fully. To many, for a long while, Mr. Buller passed merely for a man of wit; and certainly his beautiful natural gaiety of character, which by no means meant levity, was commonly thought to mean it, and did, for many years, hinder the recognition of his higher intrinsic qualities. Slowly it began to be discovered that, under all this many-coloured radiancy and coruscation, there burned a most steady light—a sound, penetrating intellect, full of adroit resources, and loyal by nature itself to all that was methodic, manful, true; in brief, a mildly resolute, chivalrous, and gallant character, capable of doing much serious service.'

When these men and their coadjutors were turned back from their 'serious service' in Canada, the work did not stop. Their successors—Lord Sydenham and his coadjutors—applied themselves with diligence and devotedness to carry out their policy and their projects. Lord Sydenham's health was no better than his predecessor's; and he died within two years of his arrival in Canada; but in that brief time, and under that disability, he had done more than most men would in many years.

Mr. C. Poulett Thomson, as he still was, went out with the leading points of his mission well fixed in his mind—that the minority was no longer to govern: that the executive and the assembly were to be brought into harmony, in accordance with what are considered the first principles of government at home, and with what was called responsible government in Canada; and that such improvements as he contemplated, must be made, not by

means of organic changes in the constitution, but by administering the powers of the government in a just and liberal spirit, so as to attract the sympathies of all to the executive. He wished to do in Canada what Lord Normanby and his coadjutors had attempted in Ireland; and it remained to be seen how much resemblance there was between the 'Family Compact' in Canada and the 'Protestants' in Ireland—between the 'French' in Canada and the Catholics in Ireland. By his earliest declarations after his arrival in different colonies, it was seen that he held two points of doctrine in regard to his own conduct—that, as the representative of the sovereign, he was responsible to the imperial authorities alone; and that his first obligation was so to form and conduct his government as to insure its harmony with the majority of the House of Assembly. The question was whether the doctrine was practicable. The proof must be the work of many years, and must include the trial of many governors. In his own short day, he did what he could. He had the inestimable advantage which was denied to his predecessor in the most critical moment of his probation—support from the government at home. The new colonial secretary, Lord J. Russell, was a sort of idol of his, and afforded him a full requital of support. He had no personal enemy in the House of Lords to scare his friends into desertion. He had every advantage: and he used his advantages well.

His chief aim was the legislative reunion of the two provinces, in order to undo, if possible, some of the mischief of their division, and promote the process of Anglicising the French. This project he announced in his speech to the legislature, at the end of 1839: and he witnessed the accomplishment of it in little more than a year. The legislative union of the two Canadas was proclaimed on the 10th of February 1841—the queen's first wedding-day, and the anniversary also of the conclusion of the treaty of 1763, which made Canada a British colony: and also of an act which it was less conciliatory to remember—the royal assent to the suspension of the constitution of Lower Canada. It needs not be said that the union was unacceptable to the French population. They struggled hard to return representatives who were opposed

to the project; and there are still many, on both sides the water, who doubt whether the matter is settled yet. The elections were conducted with much riot and some loss of life, and the first proceedings of the united legislature were stormy; but, on the whole, matters went better than the governor expected; and in a private letter of the 27th of June, a fortnight after the opening, he declared himself at ease in regard to the great experiment. So sanguine was he, that he concluded his letter with the following prophecy in regard to a supposed successor: Such a man—*not* a soldier, but a statesman—will find no difficulties in his path that he cannot easily surmount; for everything will be in grooves, running of itself and only requiring general direction.' If this was too much to anticipate, it is certain that the improvements achieved in two years were very remarkable. Men's minds were calmed; credit was re-established; public works were in rapid progress; and confidence in the imperial rule, and hope from the colonial government, had, in a great degree, superseded hatred and fear.

Lord Sydenham's health was too much shaken by disease to permit him to sustain any shock of accident; and he died, in September 1841, from the consequences of his horse falling with him—by which his leg was broken. He gave his attention to public affairs to the last, with great calmness and fortitude. His age was only forty-two.

The first association with the name of Mr. C. Poulett Thomson always was, and is still, of a repeal of the corn-laws. He was the son of a merchant; and no man in England—not Mr. Huskisson himself—ever had a more thorough understanding of the soundness of the principle of free-trade. It was to advocate this principle—and especially in regard to corn—that Mr. Thomson was returned by Manchester as her representative. For a time he did the duty well; and when he became a member of the Whig administration he stipulated for freedom to advocate a repeal of the corn-laws. But this soon grew a cold and formal affair; and we know by an extract from his private journal, written on his voyage to Canada, that he was conscious of having lost ground with the Liberal party, and as a speaker—in Manchester, and the House of Commons: 'Manchester and the House of Commons are

no longer what they were to me.' His office of chancellor of the exchequer was so disagreeable to him, that he would give up the cabinet and parliament to avoid it. He was glad to get away to Canada, and do there, by himself, the work that was pressing to be done. He and the political world seem to have been, at that time, in a state of mutual disappointment; and the reason appears to have been that he was not in himself lofty enough for the position assigned him. He was an able man—had a clear head, and a strong will, and much knowledge; but there was little morally noble in him but his strength of will—shown in his industry and his endurance of pain. He did many useful things at the Board of Trade; and he found his most favourable position when he went to Canada; but he neither entertained nor inspired political faith, nor drew towards himself any high respect or genial admiration. Though his last scene of action was his greatest and best, he was regarded, and is still, as one of the Whig failures—one of the ministers of a critical period, who, while possessed of considerable talents and some good political qualities, have done more than many worse men to shake a nation's faith—if not in the principles of politics, at least in those who are the most forward in the profession of them. The professions of Whig reformers while rehearsing the death-knell of abuses, have but too often reminded us of Dr. Johnson's knocking and summoning ghost; the conclusion in both cases being that—'nothing ensued.' What is due to Mr. C. Poulett Thomson's memory is, that he should be regarded and remembered as Lord Sydenham, who governed Canada for two years on the introduction of Lord Durham; and that, if too much self-regard mingled—as his journal shows—with his inducements to the work, he still bore in mind Lord Spencer's more generous suggestion, that Canada offered 'the finest field of exertion for any one, as affording the greatest power of doing the greatest good to one's fellow-creatures.'

CHAPTER XIII.

Jamaica—The Planters—Imperial Agents—Lord Sligo—Sir Lionel Smith—Proposed Suspension of the Constitution—Weakness of Ministers—Their Resignation—Bedchamber Question—Sir. R. Peel summoned—Household Appointments—Restoration of the Whig Ministers—Election of a Speaker—New Jamaica Bill—Official Changes—Queen's Engagement—Her Marriage—Prince Albert's Annuity.

Canada was not the only British colony which caused embarrassment to the ministry by hostility between the legislature and the executive. The affairs of the nation were brought to a crisis in the spring of 1839, by the doubt whether or not the constitution of Jamaica should be suspended.

It was then, and it will ever be, a matter of grateful surprise that such an event as the abolition of slavery should have taken place amidst such quietness as prevailed throughout the West Indies. The quietness continued in most of the settlements; and no reasonable person can read the records of the time without emotions of admiration at the temper of the negroes during the critical years which succeeded their emancipation. While their conduct was such as to need no excuse, that of their former masters ought to have every allowance. It is impossible for men—with a few exceptions—who have lived all their lives in the possession of power like that of the slave-owner, to enter at once into a state of fellow-citizenship with their former slaves, and to stand equal with them before the law, with a good grace. The Jamaica planters were now to decree in their assembly, and to live under, a whole set of new laws which had never been necessary when all other men in their island had been their property and not their neighbours; and it was most difficult for them and the imperial government to agree upon those laws. Again, many practices towards their negroes, while still in a state of apprenticeship, which appeared to them necessary and

ordinary, could not be allowed under the new system; and the whipping of women, the cruel use of the tread-mill, and many penal usages in prisons, were forbidden by imperial law, which appeared in the eyes of the planters mere favouritism to the negroes, and vexatious interference with themselves. Again, they had been reared in a temper of chartered self-will; and they could not in a moment be expected to feel and show the deference, moderation, and good manners usual among residents under a better social system than theirs. Their conduct was exactly what might have been expected—that of children in a combative mood. The members of assembly talked big, did provoking things, snubbed successive governors, used insolent language to the imperial government, endeavoured to trench upon the Abolition Act by provisions in bills of their own, drew upon themselves disallowance of their acts from home, and then refused to provide for the executive wants of the island, and even hustled, and turned out of their house, the officer who came to deliver the governor's message. After the completion of emancipation, a large proportion of the planters oppressed the patient negroes by arbitrary and illegal exactions of rent, by a misapplication of the vagrant law, and by all those harassing methods which suggest themselves to persons accustomed to despotism as a natural right, and thrown into ill-humour by a deprivation of that power. That such was the conduct of that section of society represented by the assembly is established by a mass of documentary evidence, and by the testimony of all who went fresh to the scene—such as the stipendiary magistrates, the Bishop of Jamaica, and observers from various countries travelling in the island.

On the other hand, the governors and other agents of the imperial government could not be expected to preserve an immovable patience—to resist all provocation to antagonism—to see without some emotions of partiality the oppression of the negroes who were free by law, but not yet in fact—to hear with perfect composure the scolding which they incurred by encouraging the negro women to decline hard field-work, and by putting the labourers in possession of their own case with regard to wages. It

might have been impossible for the officials to avoid collision with the planters; but there were faults on their side as well as on the other—as is always the case where quarrels exist. In 1836, Lord Sligo, the governor, violated the privileges of the assembly by sending down a message that he would not pass a bill unless it were amended as the other House proposed. For this he was rebuked by the home government; and it was necessary for him to apologise to the assembly. He did this on the 24th of May; but could not, after such a misadventure, remain in his post with any satisfaction; and he was succeeded, in the next autumn, by Sir Lionel Smith.

Sir Lionel Smith was popular at first; and during 1837, affairs proceeded with great smoothness. But the new governor was soon pronounced guilty of favouritism to the negroes, like everybody else who came from the mother-country; and the insolence of the assembly became more ostentatious than ever. It was prorogued and then dissolved, under a stubborn refusal on its own part to pass the laws necessary for the transaction of the affairs of the colony. The new assembly paraded a similar refusal, as soon as it met—in December 1838. The especial cause of wrath at this time was the passage of a bill in the imperial parliament for the regulation of prisons in Jamaica; an act rendered highly necessary by the cruelties which were perpetrated there, under various licences and pretences which must be put an end to. Another method by which the planters evinced their wrath was by forcible ejectments of the negroes from their habitations, by which distress and serious discontent were occasioned. The governor reported to the authorities at home that the laws were not clear in regard to the relations between the employing and the labouring classes, and that a complete new system was required. Under these circumstances—with local legislation at a stand, and a large section of law requiring absolute renovation—Lord Melbourne's government determined to propose to parliament a suspension of the constitution of Jamaica for five years, during which a provisional government would administer its affairs, allowing time for an improvement in the temper of all the parties who were in a state of wrath.

The government miscalculated their strength. It must be a strong government which can carry a suspension of a constitution of 200 years old under any circumstances but those of an armed rebellion, like that of Canada; and Lord Melbourne's government had for some time been the weakest of the weak. It had lost the support of the radical reform party, and was universally understood to be kept in power by the mere favour of the young queen; and there were circumstances in the demeanour of the premier which made that favour more conspicuous than it ought to have been. By this time, it had become the custom of newspapers of various politics to record the visits of Lord Melbourne to the palace, and his attendance on the queen in her drives and at her frequent parties. All reasonable persons saw how natural it was that a sovereign so young and inexperienced in her difficult duties should desire the daily attendance of a minister so qualified by years and abilities to be her instructor and guide; and how natural it was that a man of so much worldly experience and so kind a heart should be interested in the task of instruction and guidance. But even the most sensible and genial-minded saw how it was also reasonable that the public in general should be discontented at an appearance of pleasure-seeking and idleness in the first minister of an empire, whose work must be such as ought to leave him little leisure for absence from his office during any but the evening hours which are all that busy men usually spare for relaxation. It was in the midst of a prevalent desire for a prime-minister who should appear sensible of the responsibility of his position, that the cabinet brought forward a measure which at least was very daring, and on which the most conscientious politicians might naturally entertain the gravest doubts.

When Mr. Labouchere brought forward the motion on the 9th of April 1839, it appeared that, though no one defended the conduct of the Jamaica assembly, men of all parties saw one way or another by which the dire necessity of suspending the constitution might be avoided. Some were for treating the assembly as passionate children, to whom a time for thought and a place for repentance should be permitted. Some hoped that the cure might be naturally

effected by means of the enlargement of the constituency of Jamaica, which must take place henceforth through the admission of black citizens to political rights. And there were many who objected to the assignment in the preamble of the bill of insufficient grounds, while the real and avowed reason was that the present was a good occasion for that renovation of the institutions of Jamaica which was a necessary consequence, sooner or later, of the great social changes introduced by the emancipation of the negroes. The affair was fully debated. Counsel were heard on behalf of the assembly; and most able and pertinacious was the pleading. The ministers strained every nerve to carry their measure; but when the decisive division took place, on the 6th of May, or rather on the morning of the 7th, their majority, in a full House, was only 5.

On the reassembling of the Houses, the ministers announced their resignation of office. The reason assigned was, that the assembly of Jamaica would believe that its insolence was countenanced by the British parliament, and the authority of the crown would be so much weakened in that and in other colonies, that Lord Melbourne's administration could not undertake to govern them. This avowal placed the Melbourne cabinet in a difficulty on its speedy return to office; but yet it was a fortunate avowal on the whole, for it saved the ministers from the very serious imputations which they deserved to incur, on its now appearing that they had brought their young and confiding sovereign, through her very confidence in them, into a position of great perplexity and humiliation. The time had now come for the fulfilment of the predictions of those who had given early warning about the formation of the queen's household. The Whig ministers, by surrounding the queen with their wives, sisters, and daughters, exposed her to be stripped of her accustomed attendants on a change of ministry, or forced her into an unconstitutional position. They now gave her unconstitutional advice, and upheld her in an unconstitutional position. She was gently dealt with by public opinion in this matter, on account of her youth and inexperience, and also because she was really the chief sufferer on the occasion; but the

universal conviction was, that the ministers had been no true friends to their trusting sovereign. Their enemies concluded, wrongly but not unnaturally, that the whole affair was deliberately planned to give the Whigs a continued hold on office. It was as confuting this charge that Lord John Russell's avowal of inability to govern the colonies, after the late division, was useful to the reputation of the Melbourne ministry.

It was on the Tuesday night that the resignations were announced. On Wednesday, the 8th of May, at two o'clock, Sir R. Peel waited on the queen, in answer to her summons. The queen had sent for the Duke of Wellington in the first instance, and the duke had told her that the chief difficulties of a Conservative ministry would lie in the House of Commons; and he therefore advised her to send for Sir R. Peel. The remarkable truthfulness of the queen's character showed itself at once; a truthfulness which may occasionally annoy or discourage persons who had been accustomed to something different at court, but which is an inestimable security to her ministers by making always firm the ground under their feet. After the intrigue and untruthfulness of George IV., and the vacillating weakness and senile impressibility of William IV., which made their ministers feel the precariousness of the arrangements of every day, there was something so delightful to the queen's first set of ministers in her steady attachment and perfect ingenuousness, that no one can wonder if their discretion, and even their sense of political honour, were laid asleep. Exactly in the same proportion must the same qualities in the sovereign have been embarrassing to her new ministers on their first approach. As Sir R. Peel avowed to the House, the queen greeted him with a spontaneous intimation that she was much grieved to part with her late ministers, whose conduct she entirely approved. This was an awkward beginning; but the negotiation proceeded, and no difficulty arose as to the formation of the new cabinet. Nothing had thus far been said about the constitution of the household; and so little was Sir R. Peel prepared with any complaint or any plan about this, that, as he said, he did not know of what in-

dividuals the household was composed, till, having to talk over the matter with his intended colleagues, he referred to the Red-book, and was struck with the completeness of the arrangements for surrounding the Queen with the nearest relations of the Whig ministers. For instance—an instance adduced by Sir R. Peel in the House—the great difficulty of his government was Ireland, the Conservatives being in direct opposition to the policy of Lords Normanby and Morpeth; and on referring to the Red-book, he found that the two ladies in the closest attendance upon the queen were the wife of Lord Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth. Sir R. Peel told his intended colleagues what he meant to do. He should not propose any change in the offices below that of lady of the bedchamber. He trusted that the ladies who held the higher offices would voluntarily resign. If they did not, he must propose a change. This was not only reasonable, as requiring the most ordinary and indispensable token of the confidence of the sovereign, but it was a constitutional right. The highest authorities on constitutional points declared that the appointments of the household are state appointments, for which the minister is responsible. Neither the queen nor her ministers, however, knew this. Hitherto, there had been sufficient consideration for the dignity and the feelings of the sovereign to keep the constitutional question out of sight. Now that the Melbourne ministry had rashly brought it forward, it was found that Sir R. Peel was right. Though constitutionally right, it was, however, said at the time that he was politically wrong; and that he might have known that the ladies in question would certainly resign immediately, and their places be quietly filled up in a prudent manner with persons in a neutral position as to their political connections. That Sir R. Peel retired upon this difficulty was regarded as a sign that he was not ready for office; that not only was Ireland his 'difficulty,' as he said, but that it was so great a difficulty as to indispose him for office. If the Whigs now came in again, they would hold rule at his will and pleasure; and he could take their places at any time when they had fairly tried, and proved to the world, the issue of their Irish

policy. However this might be, what took place about the household appointments was made known to all the world—the queen having given permission to Sir R. Peel to tell his part of the story in parliament. The explanations of the Whig ministers, and the records of the daily news of the time, supply the rest.

When Sir R. Peel told the queen, on the Thursday, what he proposed to do, she misunderstood him, as was afterwards acknowledged, and supposed him to contemplate the removal of all her servants and household friends. This was certainly the impression she had given to the late ministers when they agreed in council on the mistaken advice which they gave the queen. The queen stopped Sir R. Peel in his statement of his wish to consult her predilections, by declaring that she would admit no change whatever in the female appointments of her household. She sent for Lord J. Russell, and expressly put the question to him whether she was not right in this. He replied that she was right; and she then naturally requested him to support her now, as she had before supported her ministers. She also appealed to Lord Melbourne, and stated her intentions to the Duke of Wellington. The duke was of opinion that Sir R. Peel must retire if the queen's mind was thus made up. Lord Melbourne called his colleagues together, and in council they advised the queen to send the following note to Sir R. Peel: 'The queen, having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir R. Peel, to remove the ladies of her bedchamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings.' Thus the Whig ministers formally assumed the responsibility of this act. No allusion is made to the constitutional principle of the case; and Lord John Russell's appeal throughout was to 'usage.' It is strange that he and his colleagues did not see how contrary to usage it was to place the sovereign in the position into which they had brought their queen.

In two or three hours Sir R. Peel sent a letter to the queen, in which he carefully related the facts of the case —an act of justice to himself under the circumstances. He had been misapprehended in the highest quarter at

first; and already reports were flying abroad through Whig households of his having desired to separate the queen from all the friends of her childhood, and to impose upon her an unacceptable set of servants of Tory politics, and so forth. The queen gave him permission to read her note and his own letter in parliament, and to set himself right, as far as these went. He was so misrepresented, however, by some close connections of the Whig ministers —among others by the Hon. William Cowper, the nephew and private secretary of Lord Melbourne, in an address to the Hertford electors, for which he afterwards publicly apologised—that the popularity of the queen and her Whig ministers suddenly rose for a short time, at the expense of the reputation of the Duke of Wellington and Sir R. Peel for loyalty and good manners; and the Melbourne ministry were thus enabled to return to office with more apparent probability of being able to govern the country than had lately been seen. But mistakes fostered and spread by party-spirit, are not of long duration; and in a few weeks, the noisiest and busiest of agitators and journalists on the side of the Whigs were glad to drop all mention of the bedchamber question. By that time, her majesty's advisers had admitted that 'her majesty's position was untenable.'

How far their own restored position was tenable was now the question. What was to be done about Jamaica, which they could govern only by a suspension of the constitution, which parliament would not effectually support? Lord J. Russell had also declared, in resigning, that there were other serious affairs which the Melbourne ministry could not conduct without more of the confidence of parliament than they possessed. Sir R. Peel's statement of what his difficulties would have been, afford some insight into those of the restored Whigs: 'The state of India, the state of Jamaica, the state of Canada, would all require my immediate consideration; and with respect to some of them, the proposal of legislative measures. I considered the internal state of this country—I saw insurrection in the provinces—I saw the letter of the noble lord opposite [Lord J. Russell], inviting the respectable part of the population of this country to form themselves into armed

societies for resisting outrage. . . . Let me take that particular question on which my chief difficulty would arise. Who can conceal from himself that my difficulties were not Canada; that my difficulties were not Jamaica; that my difficulties were Ireland?' Here was arduous work enough for any cabinet; but the most insuperable difficulty in the way of that of Lord Melbourne was the Jamaica question.

On the reconstruction of the ministry, the first business was to elect a new speaker of the Commons. Mr. Abercromby had before wished to resign, on the plea of health. The House was sorry to part with him, for he had discharged his duty well. Mr. Charles Shaw Lefevre was chosen to succeed him by a majority of 18 over Mr. Goulburn, who was proposed by the Conservatives. This election took place on the 27th of May; and on the 30th, Mr. Labouchere introduced a new Jamaica Bill. The opposition, under the circumstances, held the control of this measure, and it was amended in the Lords till it became what Sir R. Peel had proposed. It allowed time to the assembly to re-enact the annual laws without which the affairs of the island could not proceed; and invested the governor in council with power to renew those laws, at the expiration of two months after the assembly should have separated without re-enacting them. This measure, which the ministers declared to be, in their opinion, only better than none, passed its last parliamentary stage on the 9th of July.

After the close of the session, Lord J. Russell became colonial secretary in the place of Lord Normanby, who had held the office only since the preceding February. Lord Normanby went to the home office; and Mr. F. Baring became chancellor of the exchequer, in the place of Mr. Spring Rice, who entered the Upper House as Baron Monteagle. Lord Howick left the war-office, and was succeeded by Mr. Macaulay; and some changes took place in the minor functions of the administration.

In the midst of such circumstances as have been exhibited, and of others which remain to be detailed—in view of the colonial difficulties, the domestic distress which was now daily darkening over England, the

violence of the Chartists, the critical state of Ireland, the sudden and portentous agitation against the corn-laws, the manifest feebleness of the ministry, and the no less manifest misguidance of the young sovereign by her paternal prime-minister—there was nothing that was more desired by the nation at large than to see their young queen married. Every one knew that her consort —be he who he might—would have no concern with politics. It was not that. It was that the domestic life of the sovereign might be naturally compacted, and that a happy domestic life might be the point of support of her public life. Some rabid Tory gentlemen had lately grown insolent, and taken insufferable liberties with the royal name. Some mistakes had been made, in both public and private relations; and the natural and the most desirable security against other such misadventures seemed to be the placing of the virtuous young sovereign under the sanctities of a genuine home. There had been a constant succession of royal visitors from the continent—a long array of young princes who were called in the newspapers 'the royal suitors;' but it was not till the beginning of 1839 that any general impression existed as to where the queen's preference rested, or whether she had any. At last, however, it was no great surprise to anybody when the queen summoned her privy-council to meet on the 23rd of November, and then communicated her intention to ally herself in marriage with Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. The council requested her majesty to allow the news to be made public; and the general satisfaction was all that she could have desired. It might have been wished that her intended husband should not have been her cousin-german, and that he should have been five or seven years older than the queen, instead of three months younger; but there was everything in the reputation of the prince, and in the character of his thoughtful and informed mind, to encourage the hope that the connection would be one of permanent satisfaction to the nation.

During the winter, the aspect of public affairs darkened so much that it was the universal wish that the marriage should take place with the least possible delay. The

young pair had a far more thorough knowledge of each other than is usual in the case of lovers; they had been companions in childhood, and friends during their youth—there was nothing to wait for; and in a few weeks the young queen became a wife, to the great joy of those who most desired that her life should be serene and happy. The marriage took place on the 10th of February 1840, amidst fitting pomp and observance, in the palace of St. James's. It was precisely at a quarter before one o'clock that the firing of cannon announced to the inhabitants of London that the ring was placed on the finger of the bride; and a little before four, the queen and her husband set out for Windsor, leaving London to the gaiety for which it had little spirits on any meaner occasion of that dark year. For the day all forgot their anxieties and fears in banquets and illuminations.

A month before the marriage took place, the queen had declared to parliament in the royal speech her intention of taking Prince Albert for her husband, and her confidence that her subjects would enable her to provide for such an establishment as might appear suitable to the rank of the prince, and the dignity of the crown. These announcements, in themselves as formidably unusual for a young girl to make as could be conceived, were offered with a simplicity and dignity that won all hearts; and the subsequent awkward conclusion to the discussion on the prince's income was accepted by them both with the best possible grace.

On the 20th of January, three weeks before their marriage, a bill for the naturalisation of Prince Albert was introduced in the Lords, and passed rapidly, by the suspension of all the standing orders. The only stop in its progress was owing to the ordinary cause of delay in Whig measures—a mistake which could not be allowed to pass. Precedence next to the queen was provided without any safeguard; so that, in case of the queen's death without heirs, and the consequent accession of the King of Hanover, Prince Albert would have precedence of the then heir-apparent, the Prince of Wales. The ministers first amended their bill by proposing to give precedence next after any heir-apparent; but, again, in order to avoid delay, Lord

Melbourne declared his intention of omitting all that part of the bill which related to the subject of precedence. Thus reduced to a project of simple naturalisation, the bill passed both Houses as rapidly as possible. In discussing the address, some question had been made in both Houses about the omission of any declaration of Prince Albert being a Protestant—a scruple which was decided to be unnecessary, as, by the act of settlement, the Protestantism of the royal consort was an indispensable condition. All parties were eager to declare their conviction of the indisputable Protestantism of the prince, whose family were the first protectors of the Reformation. There were some who could perhaps have told how much of the family pride of the ducal family of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha was invested in its connection with Luther; and how in the prince's portfolio might be seen sketches of the old castle on its height, finished with the care which is given to the delineation of sacred places, because there Luther took refuge for a time, and therein are his apartments—his bedstead itself—preserved with reverential care. If the object had been to select for the queen the most Protestant of the Protestant princes of Germany, the searchers should have gone first to Saxony; and when there, to the old castle of Coburg; and there, at Luther's table, or at the foot of Luther's worm-eaten pulpit, they would have found our Prince Albert.

As to the annuity to be voted to the prince—Lord J. Russell proposed that it should be, in accordance with precedents which he adduced, £50,000 to be granted out of the consolidated fund, to commence on the day of his marriage, and continue for life. After an adjournment from the 24th to the 27th of January, Mr. Hume moved that the amount should be £21,000. This proposal was voted down by a large majority. But it was clear that the times were unfaveurable for a liberal grant. The distress of the manufacturing classes was becoming fearful —the price of wheat being at that time 81s., while the cotton-mills were working short time; and the prevalent suffering was shown by armed outbreaks of Chartism, and the rapid sinking of the revenue. The chancellor of the exchequer was announcing a deficit with every successive

budget. At the close of the session of 1838, parliament, following the lead of the ministers, had thought it right to refuse an augmentation of income to the Duke of Sussex, though the refusal compelled him to resign his office of president of the Royal Society; and had also, by a narrow majority, decided against indemnifying their speaker for the loss of his property by the fire which consumed the houses of parliament. The sanguine and complacent Whig ministry were now so truly alarmed at the aspect of affairs, that economy became naturally the ruling idea of the House of Commons. Yet, when the sum of £30,000 per annum was proposed by the opposition, instead of the £50,000 of the ministers, Lord J. Russell lost temper, and declared that the amendment was intended as a mark of disrespect to the queen. For this, he was duly rebuked by Sir J. Graham and Sir R. Peel, who showed reason enough for their advocacy of the smaller sum, independent of the distress of the country, which they did not conceive to be concerned in the question. The majority in favour of the smaller amount was 104, in a House of 420.

The prince took all in good part. Kind-hearted and reasonable, he was perhaps really willing to bear his share of the pressure of the times, and ready to suppose that the House of Commons was the best judge of what his income ought to be. If not so, he was too sensible to show any discontent; and by his good-humour on the occasion he gained an esteem which was more worth having than any wealth that parliament could have given him.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dark Times—Successive Harvests—Grinding of Corn in Bond—Discontents—Trade Unions—Factory Question—Chartism—National Convention—National Petition—John Frost—Riots—Rising at Newport—Origin of the Anti-corn-law League—Delegates—The Ministers—Motion for Inquiry refused—Consequences—Attacks on the Queen—Dockyard Fires—Storms—Repeal Agitation—Troubles in the East—Birth of the Princess Royal.

Allusion has been made to the darkness of the times in 1839 and 1840. Since the peace, there had hardly been a season so gloomy in fact and in prospect. In looking for the causes of the misery and crime of this period, we find them, as usual, in the state of the crops. There were then, as usual, multitudes of people who did not understand; and the fact and their failure to understand it together were soon to bring about the greatest social, as parliamentary reform was the greatest political, event of the century. There were then, as usual, professional men, country gentlemen, and others by hundreds, who said with an air of superiority, that they took no interest in politics; and these were the men who concluded that the commotions and outrages of the period were owing to the unfortunate propensity of 'the lower classes' to concern themselves with politics. There were then, as usual, clergymen by hundreds, who said with a complacent smile, or an air of pious trust, that since England was England there had always been alarms of bad crops, but that it always ended in there being a harvest; these gentlemen not having the remotest idea of the differences between one group of years and another as to production of food, and never perceiving that it was their especial duty as clergymen to look closely into the causes of want, woe, and crime. They thought that the perverseness of the heart of man was explanation enough of any amount or capricious accession of guilt; and, as they could not stoop to politics or political economy, they remained unaware that the average of moral disease might be anticipated as

confidently as that of physical disease, from the estimate of the harvests of any group of years. It was no thanks to them that this miserable experiment is now no longer likely to be tried. It is no thanks to them that, by opening to our country an access to the harvests of the world, a prospect lies before us of a more equable supply and price of food, and a cessation of the fluctuations and cruel uncertainties which perilled the fortunes of the well-fed, and wore out the heart and hope of the multitudes who had to win their bread from day to day. There were still hundreds and thousands of men—and the leading politicians of both parties were among them—who thought that to attack the corn-laws was to attack the constitution of society; who would no more listen to evidence of the mischief of agricultural protection than they would listen to arguments against the institution of property. It is worth recording again here, that the prime-minister himself had volunteered his opinion on the matter in the House of Lords, saying that he had heard of many mad things in his life, but, before God, the idea of repealing the corn-laws was the maddest he had ever heard of. Thus it was with Lord Melbourne. Lord J. Russell counselled the House to refuse to hear evidence on the operation of the corn-laws. Sir R. Peel was as yet pondering sliding-scales, and destined to propose and try another before he should discover that this was a matter in which adjustments could be of no possible use, while they were pretty sure to do mischief. To set against all these classes of men, there was another—a little band at first, but soon becoming a host—who understood the matter enough to be sure of attaining a thorough knowledge of it, as soon as they should combine to act upon what they knew. The darkening of the times in 1839 determined these men to aim at a repeal of the corn-laws as the first object to their own fortunes, to the actual preservation of the working-classes, and to the welfare of the nation at large.

During the four years from 1832 to 1835 inclusive, more wheat was grown in Great Britain, it is believed, than was ever known before. More wheat was sown: and the improvements in tillage were by that time so considerable as to produce clear results. But during those four years

also the winters had no undue frosts; the spring rains were enough, and not too much; and the summer suns were warm enough to harden and ripen the grain. They were four noble harvests, as far as wheat was concerned, though barley rose nearly to the price of wheat, and hay and pulse were dear. The farmers suffered, as they were apt to do, under a stringent corn-law which made them rich in bad seasons, and prepared for their impoverishment in abundant years. But while they were in such adversity as that royal speeches commiserated them, and parliament discussed their case, everybody else was prospering. The very cattle, sheep, and pigs, were eating wheat; brewers and distillers were making beer and spirits from it. The agricultural labourers, though receiving very low wages, were more comfortable than usual, from the cheapness of provisions. They found themselves in easier circumstances with 8*s.* per week, and wheat at 35*s.*, than with 12*s.* per week, and wheat at 77*s.* As for all other working-classes of the kingdom, it was a time of high prosperity for them. All the mines and all the mills were busy, and the tradesmen of the towns were everywhere prosperous; for the largest classes of society were employed on full wages; and bread being cheap, they had money to spare for other objects of purchase. The houses of the operatives filled with furniture, and their chests with good clothes. The tradesmen rose in proportion from this increase of custom, and in their turn improved the condition of the manufacturers, who, in consequence, kept up or extended their manufacture, to the continued benefit of the operatives. Such was the happy state of things while we were blessed with good harvests; and the prosperity reached its height towards the close of 1835, when wheat was at 35*s.* 4*d.* Owing to its cheapness, less was now sown of wheat, and more of other things which had become dear.

In 1836, the spring was cold and dry, and the summer was ungenial in the north of England and Scotland; so that the harvest was not well got in. On the whole, there was a considerable falling off from preceding years; but still, more than enough was got in for the wants of the country till the harvest of 1837. The crop of 1837 was

just sufficient for the wants of the country; but it was inferior to the production of any one of the five preceding seasons. The people were still eating abundantly, as the last few years had accustomed them to do. If now there had been a propitious season, everything might have gone on smoothly, though food prices were higher than they had been. During the commercial difficulties of the spring of 1837, which have been before exhibited, when credit was disturbed by foreign influences, the price of wheat, as of other things, had risen unduly; but at the end of 1837, it was 53*s.*; and at this price, manufactures, commerce, and the condition of the people might have gone on without deterioration. But the weather was now dreadful. In the middle of January an extraordinary frost set in, which lasted so long as to occasion serious fears for the wheat in the ground; and in February, the price rose to 55*s.* 3*d.* In March, it rose further; and again in May, when frosts recurred. In July, it was 68*s.* As harvest prospects did not improve, the price of wheat rose to 77*s.* in the third week in August. In September, all the bonded wheat in the kingdom was entered for home consumption. Prices fell as a large quantity of foreign corn was thrown into the market in September; but by the next January, wheat was at 81*s.* 6*d.* The difference of quantity home-grown between 1834 and this date was above 7,000,000 of quarters. At the same time, and in strict connection with this deficiency, manufactures had fallen off, and the prices of articles in common use among the working-classes had risen; so that those classes found themselves now receiving less wages, and compelled to pay dear for the necessaries of life. The distress was becoming formidable. Yet were hundreds of the clergy smiling over the usual alarms, as they called them, about the harvests; and the gentry who prided themselves on taking no interest in politics, discoursed upon the perverseness and wickedness of the human heart, which led men into discontent and rebellion, while living in the best country in the world. There was some increase in the wages of agricultural labour; and this was pointed out as a proof that high prices bring high wages; whereas the slight and temporary rise of agricultural wages fell far

short of the increased expenditure of the labourers for food.

In May 1839, there was snow by day, and frost of some continuance by night. So much foreign corn had been let in, that prices had fallen, wheat being at 67*s.* 10*d.* in July. More foreign corn was let out of bond; yet so bad were the prospects of the harvest, that by the middle of August wheat was again at 72*s.* 3*d.* More foreign wheat, dry and sound, was wanted to render our own damp and unripened grain fit for food; and instead of our importing largely from Ireland, it was necessary to import more dry foreign wheat into Ireland than we could obtain of her damp and unripened grain. There was every ground for apprehension that, while the working-classes were grievously underfed, there would still be a deficiency of 2,000,000 quarters or more, while waiting for the next harvest.

During this time, the 'landed interest' were watchful over their protecting law, suspecting reasonably enough that attempts would be made to relieve the suffering classes from its pressure. The closeness of their vigilance was shown by a curious incident which took place in March 1838. Colonel Seale proposed in the House, that, to save merchants engaged in foreign trade from the necessity of obtaining their ship-supplies of food from the ports of the Baltic, permission should be given to grind the corn held in bond in our own ports—security being afforded for the exportation of the flour. To many of the most Conservative members in the House, the case appeared so clearly harmless to the British cultivator, that the first reading of the bill was carried by a large majority; but the 'landed interest' made so great an outcry about touching the corn question at all, that on the second reading the bill was thrown out by a majority of 220 to 150.

The natural consequences of popular distress showed themselves exactly as might have been expected, and with increasing force from year to year. If the rulers of the country did not understand the causes of the adversity, it was no wonder that the uneducated sufferers did not. While professional men and other gentry ascribed the turbulence of the time to the ingratitude of the human heart, the government—the cabinet, and both Houses of

parliament—were sure of nothing so thoroughly as that the corn-laws had nothing to do with the distress, and therefore that their repeal would not cure it; and the working-classes never doubted that the government could cure it if they would, and that the manufacturers oppressed them by appropriating an undue share of the proceeds of manufactures. Thus the clergy obtained no hold over the classes which most needed their counsel and consolations; or, if they got them into the churches preached to exasperated hearers, who said on week-days that they would not be put off with promises of bliss hereafter, from claiming the simple recompense of labour in this life. The government sat, in its deliberations, on the crust of a volcano; and amidst successive warnings, was not half conscious of its danger. When a spurt of flame or a jet of hot stones scared them now and then, they threw cold water into the particular crevice, or blocked it up with rubbish, and supposed the fire was put out. The Whig attorney-general, Sir John Campbell, declared at a public breakfast at Edinburgh, in the autumn of 1839, that Chartism was extinct—because Birmingham and Newcastle had been quieted. At the same time, the trades-unions became formidable to the last degree. On the trial of some cotton-spinners at Glasgow, and on inquiry into the trade combinations of Dublin, facts came out which appalled all who heard of the evidence. On no occasion did Mr. O'Connell appear to more advantage than in his action on this subject. At the risk of much unpopularity, he denounced these combinations with his whole power of feeling and eloquence—combinations, not to obtain certain terms of recompense by fair association for an open object, but to ruin capitalists by burning their mills, and to oppress fellow-labourers by forbidding them to work on terms which they were willing to accept. It came out that threatening letters were sent to masters, and premiums were offered for firing their mills; that working men were beaten, sent away to foreign countries, burned with vitriol, kept in fear of their lives; and as there was too much reason to believe, actually murdered. During this activity of the trades-unions, the impoverishing of the operatives went on at an increased rate; for they were

compelled to pay for the expenses of the combination while they had any funds left. The chancellor of the exchequer noticed in the House, in May 1838, the remarkable diminution of the deposits in savings-banks. This brought the operative class all the sooner upon the funds of the capitalists. From working the mills short time, in order to prolong the prospect of any work at all, the mill-owners were soon working even the short time at a loss, rather than turn the poor people adrift entirely; and their capital was melting away from week to week—given to feed the poor as truly as if it had been paid as poor-rate. Meantime Lord Ashley was regarding this class of men as oppressors who wrung their wealth out of the sinews of children, and every session renewed his motion for the protection of factory-children; while the ministers, who evidently did not understand the case, paltered with it in a way which drew on them a severe rebuke from Sir R. Peel: 'For the government to say,' were his words, 'session after session, that it would bring in a bill on the subject; for the government, session after session, to abandon the bills they introduce, without permitting others to be brought in by individuals in their stead—is like applying a perpetual blister to the sides of the country, and keeping up the fever and irritation of a dangerous sore.... It is because I cannot fail to perceive the competition with which this country is threatened—it is because I see that the interests of humanity, in the large view of the question, are likely to be less consulted by the shortsighted restriction of labour, than they are by its perfect freedom—it is because the fact is unquestionable, that though you may exempt the child from fatigue, you also deprive it of prospective employment, by driving the manufacturers to seek elsewhere that protection which is denied them at home—it is for these reasons that I implore parliament to decide the question this night, whether it will legislate or not.' It was not decided that night, nor for some years afterwards. After that session Mr. Poulett Thomson, who understood the matter, appeared no more in the House; and when he was gone, the other Whig ministers appeared unable to hold the convictions they occasionally expressed against legislative

interference with factory labour. Thus was the irritation of this 'perpetual blister' added to the many others under which employers and labourers were suffering. The mill-owners resented this interference with the management of their affairs, which operated as a reduction of the value of the machinery which they had put up in the expectation of freedom in making their arrangements—seeing, all the time, how fruitless must be all attempts to legislate between parents and children, and how manufactures must droop under arbitrary restrictions imposed by the legislature. The operatives were kept in a state of agitation, whatever might be their opinions on the subject. Some fretted at the refusal of the legislature to let Lord Ashley take care of their children; while those of an opposite way of thinking declared it no time to be preventing their families from earning all they could, and resented this interference with their only possession, their labour, as the most flagrant attack yet attempted on the rights of the poor. All this did not tend to the tranquillisation of the country.

During the latter part of 1838, when Chartist meetings were held frequently, and with a formidable aspect throughout the north of England, the home secretary, Lord John Russell, had shown a humane anxiety to bring the ignorant crowd to their senses, and within the limits of order, without visiting their guilty leaders with any treatment which could be construed as persecution, and be made to yield the ordinary fruits of persecution. Many complaints were made of want of vigour in this method of proceeding; but there appears every reason to believe that the disorder of the time would have been more violent if severity had been used, instead of being extinguished. Under a Sidmouth rule at the home-office, we might have seen all the north of England in a blaze of rebellion before the end of 1838. As it was, matters grew too threatening to be left to take their course without check. Great allowance was to be made for the irritation of the Lancashire operatives, from suffering of body and mind; but in the month of November, the torch-light meetings became formidable enough to alarm the inhabitants at large, to whom protection was due. On the 22nd

of that month, the home secretary sent a letter to the Lancashire magistrates, requesting them to make public notification of the illegality of torch-light meetings of the kind then in fashion, and to declare their intention of preventing or dispersing such meetings. This was followed up, in the middle of December, by a royal proclamation, which enjoined all persons to desist from holding torch-light meetings. It was time to put some restraint on the leaders and orators of these meetings; for now the Rev. J. Stephens, the chief orator, had denounced a mill-owner at Ashton-under-Lyne as 'a devil's magistrate,' and had prophesied that 'his house would soon be too hot to hold him;' and this gentleman's factory was fired one night soon after, while Stephens was holding forth to a torch-light assemblage. Stephens was arrested before the end of the month, but admitted to bail, while awaiting his trial at the Liverpool assizes. While out on bail, he preached to crowded congregations, with a violence of language which looked like insanity. Some of the witnesses against him were respectable Wesleyans, who had sat under his father's ministry, and were most reluctant to appear against the agitator; but they knew so much of the sharpening of pikes and preparation of fire-arms, and were so alarmed and distressed at the spread of a spirit of murderous rebellion in a neighbourhood generally quiet, that they could not doubt their obligation to get Mr. Stephens silenced by the law. He was sentenced to an imprisonment of a year and a half in Knutsford Jail. A far more respectable and reasonable man was chairman of some of the earlier meetings—among others, at the great Kersal Moor meeting at Manchester, when not fewer than 200,000 persons are said to have been congregated—Mr. Fielden, the member for Oldham—the great promoter, under Lord Ashley, of the ten-hour measure. Mr. Fielden was a man of great benevolence, and of a disinterestedness which gave him an influence among men better informed than himself, which he had not judgment or knowledge to command. He was too good for such work as the grosser kind of Chartist agitation, when he once saw what it was becoming; but his early sanction of torch-light meetings was a mistake to be regretted. The other leaders at this

period were Richard Oastler, of Leeds, whose complacent ignorance unfitted him for any task of political guidance: and Feargus O'Connor, whose only escape from a charge of cruel fraud on his followers for a course of years, is in an admission of such senselessness and ignorance as have made him the worst enemy of those whom he professed to serve. It is very probable that from the moment when Feargus O'Connor first placed himself at the head of a Chartist procession to the last stoppage of his land scheme, he may have fancied himself a sort of saviour of the working-classes: but if so, he must bear the contempt and compassionate disapproval of all men of ordinary sense and knowledge, as the only alternative from their utter reprobation.

After 1839 came in, new leaders and new mobs arose, and also a more respectable association, which deserved better than to be connected in name and reputation with the Chartism of the Stephenses and Oastlers, and the torch-bearers who fired factories. Delegates were sent from the working-classes to form a convention in London, for the promotion of the rights of the Commons of England, and especially for calling the Commons House to account for its neglect of the interests of the working-classes. This National Convention could not effect much, from the want of intellectual discipline, political knowledge, and business habits, among the members: but it was so clear in its reprobation of physical force for the attainment of its objects, so free from rapacity in its aims, and so earnest in its pursuit of rights and privileges which are legitimate and virtuous objects of desire, that it was regarded with kindness by all good-hearted and unprejudiced men, however little hope or fear they might feel from its proceedings. This kindly feeling was very evident on the presentation of the national petition prepared by the convention, and carried into the House of Commons on the 14th of June. It was a wonderful document —'a cylinder of parchment about the diameter of a coach-wheel, literally rolled into the House'—and signed by upwards of 1,200,000 persons. The ordinary rule of permitting no speech on the presentation of a petition was disregarded on this occasion; and when a member desired, in insolent language, to stop the

business, he was resisted by the feeling of the House and the indulgent disposition of the speaker. So Mr. Attwood was allowed, by a listening House, to advocate the plea of the petitioners for the 'recovery of those ancient privileges' which were 'the original and constitutional rights of the Commons of England.' The temper of the House showed that the effort was not altogether in vain, though no legislative consequences could be expected to ensue. No persons in England better deserved a respectful hearing than this million of petitioners; and there is reason to believe that no persons in England more sincerely mourned the outbreaks of the physical-force Chartists during this year than the leaders of the National Convention. The petition occasioned a good deal of discussion in the House, when, on the 12th of July, a committee was moved for to consider the five points of the petition—universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual parliaments, remuneration of members, and abolition of the property qualification—but the committee was refused by a majority of 189, in a House of 281.

The home secretary remained on the watch during the first half of the year—till assured by the attorney-general that Chartism was extinct. In February, he called to account a magistrate of the borough of Newport, in Monmouthshire, a Mr. Frost, for violent language at a public meeting. Mr. Frost's replies were insolent in the extreme; but, as there had been at the outset one of the ordinary Whig mistakes, in supposing him a magistrate of the county instead of the borough, and as Mr. Frost disclaimed a part of the charge, he was not at once removed. This was a stretch of forbearance much censured when the event showed Mr. Frost's unworthiness of it; but he soon provoked his removal; and it does not appear that the gentleness used towards him in the first instance had any effect in promoting the subsequent rebellion; while it was valuable as proving the disposition of the government to lenity in a time of popular suffering. In April, there was a Chartist riot at Devizes; or rather, a rising of the people of Devizes, under Tory leadership, against the Chartist assemblage of labourers who came, a thousand strong, armed with bludgeons, to hold a meeting in the

market-place. In July, Birmingham was kept in a state of disturbance for many days by Chartist turbulence. Sixty policemen were sent to Birmingham, on application from the authorities of the town; and a collision ensued between the police and the mob, which was ended only by the appearance of a troop of cavalry, after some stabs and many blows had been given. The interference was resented by some of the better order of Chartist leaders, in published resolutions, for the seditious character of which the authors suffered trial and imprisonment. The riot took place on Thursday, the 4th of July. On the Sunday evening, a mob stopped the service at St. Philip's Church. On Monday, the police and military again dispersed a meeting. On Tuesday, the Chartists, having been denied the use of the Town-hall, met in an open space. The Rifles were called to disperse the assemblage, but were so assailed that they were ordered to load and make ready. Before they fired, a troop of dragoons came down upon the mob, who then fled. The inhabitants hoped that the mischief was over; but on the 15th, a far worse outbreak took place. First, windows and street-lamps were smashed; then iron palisades were torn up; houses were forced, warehouses pillaged, and bonfires made of the contents; lights put out in the streets; and, finally, houses burned down. It was by the military that the outbreak was overcome at last; and it was some days before the orderly classes of the town could take any rest. By that time they were very weary and very wrathful; weary with patrolling the streets, and keeping watch against incendiary fires; and angry with that most painful sort of wrath which has in it a mixture of fear. Some of the best workmen in Birmingham were Chartists. Some of the most indispensable men in the town had become insufferably insolent to their employers, without the excuse of hunger, which was admissible in the case of too many of the Lancashire malcontents. Many of the Birmingham Chartists might have been ten-pound householders, and in possession of all the substantial comforts of life, if they had been capable of the prudence and self-denial which had raised some of their employers from a position like their own; and it was exasperating to their employers to

be insulted in their own manufactories, and their business put to hazard, by men whom they could not well dismiss, but by whom they were told that all capitalists were tyrants, born with a silver-spoon in their mouths, and so on. The evil here was clearly not political. It was social—the master-evil of popular ignorance, under which it appeared but too probable that society must be dissolved, sooner or later, if popular enlightenment could not be achieved. Yet Birmingham is one of the best of our towns in regard to means of popular instruction. Sheffield is another; but in Sheffield, matters were even worse. Besides the usual manœuvres of breaking windows, extinguishing the street lights, and pelting the soldiery, the malcontents planned the murder of some of the best and kindest-hearted gentlemen of the place. At Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at Stockport, at Manchester, as well as in the neighbourhood of London, assemblages were attempted for purposes of intimidation, and dispersed with more or less of difficulty. One of the most painful incidents was the extortion of money or goods from shopkeepers, under intimidation; a practice which called forth a letter from the home secretary to the magistrates of Manchester, encouraging them to use the most vigorous means to put down this method of pillage. Many who leaned towards the Chartists before, in sympathy if not in conviction, gave them up altogether on the appearance of this symptom of the agitation. One of the strange caprices of the malcontents was attending the cathedrals and other churches in overwhelming numbers, and wearing some sort of badge. Five hundred of them went in procession to St. Paul's, in August. At first, most of them insisted on wearing their hats; but they yielded the point to the verger, and behaved very quietly. On the next Sunday, Norwich Cathedral was crowded to the last foothold by the Chartists of the city; to whom the bishop in his sermon offered a strong but kind remonstrance. At the Old Church at Manchester, there was a singular scene, if the record of the time be true. The Chartists quitted the church on the giving out of the text of the sermon; and the reason is said to be that, instead of accepting the Scripture verse prescribed beforehand by his Chartist hearers, the preacher

chose: 'My house is the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.' For the preacher's sake, we must hope that the choice of his text had no reference to the Chartists. This mode of action—by filling the churches—was soon given up, as it evidently did not aid the Chartist cause, and was wisely passed over in quietness; and it had ceased before the autumn, with those other demonstrations, whose discontinuance had persuaded the attorney-general himself that Chartism was extinct.

It was only a lull; and that Edinburgh declaration was mischievous during the ensuing weeks, as showing that the ministers were off their guard—to say nothing of its tone of triumph, which was anything but conciliatory. Mr. Frost was awake and active, and far from grateful for the leniency which had afforded him an opportunity for remaining in the magistracy at the beginning of the year. On the 3rd of November, which was on Sunday, his brother-magistrates at Newport had information that he was marching down large bodies of armed men from the hills upon the town. The attack upon the town was to have been made in the night; but the weather was bad; and the malcontents did not muster in sufficient force till the morning, when, at about ten o'clock, they entered the town. They attacked the hotel where the military were stationed, and provoked the destruction of more than twenty of their number. The magistrates acted with eminent discretion and courage; the mayor, especially, so distinguishing himself that he was afterwards knighted at Windsor Castle. Frost's followers amounted to upwards of 7000 when within the town, and there were very many more upon the hills.

The conspiracy, frustrated by bad weather, and the good conduct of the Newport authorities, was found to be a truly formidable one, from its orderly arrangements, the number of persons in the district involved in the scheme, and its connection with the Chartists of Birmingham and other places. Two other leaders, Jones and Williams, were arrested and tried with Frost. There could be no doubt of the enormity of their crime in leading this rebellion; and it was not easy to see on what plea their pardon could be asked. It was asked, however—even

demanded, from time to time, for some years; but it was enough that their lives were spared. If their punishment of transportation were remitted, it is difficult to see who should be punished. Many who lamented the transportation of the Dorsetshire labourers could see no excuse for Frost, Williams, and Jones.

The state of things was very fearful. The great unsolved question of the rights of labour lay at the bottom of these perplexities and prevalent discontents; and nobody saw it—nobody who could obtain a hearing, or in any way exhibit the facts. Those who saw anything of the truth were precisely those to whom a hearing was denied—the more enlightened of the manufacturing and trading class who were turned back from the doors of the legislature when they asked the Commons to listen to proof of the disorganising tendency of the corn-laws. The Chartists understood nothing of the operation of the corn-laws against their interests; and they were so far from comprehending their own existing rights, while demanding others, that they permitted pretended friends to urge the legislature to take from them the command of their only possession—their labour. Tory agitators went among them to incite them to demand ten-hour bills, and to alienate them from asking a free supply of food. To obtain a free admission of food was only a part of the satisfaction of the great difficulty—of the rights of labour; but it was a very important part—at the time, the chief and most immediately pressing consideration: but the government did not see it; neither House of the legislature saw it, any more than the Chartists; and they believed that the men who had begun to agitate for it, were disturbing an old system—the radical policy of the empire—for the sake of enlarging the margin of manufacturing profits, and putting more money into their own pockets, without giving the operatives their share. All this was mournful blindness and folly; but the final action against the corn-laws had fairly begun, and those who were engaged in it knew that their end was secure. If the great labour question could remain a matter of controversy till the corn question should be settled, instead of becoming one of revolution, all might yet be well; and

to accomplish this, the anti-corn-law agitators set to work with a zeal, a knowledge, a pertinacity, and a spirit of self-sacrifice, probably unequalled in the history of peaceful agitation. When their work was done, and they looked back upon its beginning, they were surprised to find how little they themselves knew when they first devoted themselves to the cause. The deepest of them had scarcely an idea how closely the interests of the agricultural classes were involved in the establishment of a free-trade in food, and how society was injured through all its ramifications by an artificial restriction in the first article of human necessity; but what they did know was clear; as far as they reasoned, their reasoning was sound; and if one part of their view was more clear and sound than another, it was that of the implication of this question with the larger and deeper one of the rights of labour, which was elsewhere causing only that perilous agitation that must issue either in suppression by force on the one hand, or in revolution on the other. The anti-corn-law agitators were, at this period, the only true Conservatives in the whole range of our society.

On the 18th of September 1838, a public dinner was given to Dr. Bowring at Manchester, when the persons present—between fifty and sixty—agreed to form themselves into an association for the promotion of the principles of free-trade. They soon organised their force, settled their scheme of public instruction and political movement, raised subscriptions, were sanctioned by the Manchester Chamber of commerce, and made known their existence to the large towns of England and Scotland by recommending similar associations in them all. This was the origin of the Anti-Corn-Law League.

At the beginning of 1839, we find assembled in London a large body of delegates from Manchester, Birmingham, and Glasgow, and the great manufacturing towns, whose business it was to examine and analyse the House of Commons, in regard to the corn-law question; to watch over its action on that question, and see how far professions were supported by knowledge and sincerity on either side; and to challenge the House, collectively and individually, by offering to prove at its bar all the

allegations they had made against the operation of the corn-laws. We find the metropolitan boroughs holding meetings to appoint delegates on their own behalf, and passing resolutions of discontent at the omission of the topic of the corn-laws from the queen's speech. On the 7th of February, when Mr. Villiers had given notice of a motion that evidence on the operation of the corn-laws should be heard at the bar, Lord J. Russell made a little speech which caused a stronger sensation than some of the longest he had ever delivered. It was copied into the newspapers with a declaration that it made one's blood boil; and the universal impression, among men of all parties, seems to have been, that it proved him so unaware of the existing circumstances and temper of the nation as to injure his immediate reputation and influence, and to weaken him, unaccountably to himself, in every one of the various positions in regard to the corn-law question, in which he afterwards endeavoured to establish himself. He said 'the impression on his mind was that it would be his duty to oppose the motion as to hearing evidence at the bar. He had not as yet found sufficient reasons or precedents to induce him to adopt that course. At the same time he must say, that as there would be a great deal of discussion relating to facts, when a mode was proposed which he thought was conformable to precedent, and not inconvenient to the House, by which these facts could be ascertained, he should be willing, although not ready to propose it himself, to support a motion so to ascertain the facts.' This might have been taken as a matter of course from Sir R. Peel in those days—this speech about propriety and precedent, and the convenience of the House, in regard to a matter about which 3,000,000 of the best subjects in the empire had sent up representatives to London, and a message to parliament. Such a speech would have suited Sir R. Peel's then position and views with regard to the corn-laws. But Lord J. Russell had declared to his Stroud constituents that the existing corn-laws were indefensible; and he declared on this very night that he believed the time to be come for a change. The delegates who were analysing the House now knew where to place Lord J. Russell on their

lists. He disapproved the corn-laws in the abstract—just as the Carolina planters disapprove slavery in the abstract. In both cases, when an opportunity for acting from that disapprobation occurs, the action goes over to the other side. This was proved on the 18th of the same month, when, the cabinet being divided on Mr Villiers's motion, Lord J. Russell voted against it, with Lord Howick, Lord Palmerston, Mr. Spring Rice, and some minor officials, while Mr. Poulett Thomson, in this his last session in parliament, and Sir J. C. Hobhouse, voted for inquiry. Mr. Villiers's speech that night was not lost. It was a statement of singular force and clearness; and the occasion was destined to great celebrity. Of all the many weak and blind acts of the Whig ministers, none was more memorable than this refusal to hear evidence on a subject whose importance they professed to admit; and Mr. Villiers's position was conspicuous in proportion to their fall. On that night he assumed his post undisputed as the head authority in the legislature on the subject of the corn-laws; and from that night the Whig ministers who opposed his motion lost all chance of being generally trusted in any popular action on that subject. If they had understood this as others understood it, their exit from power two years afterwards would have been made in another manner than it was. The majority of the Commons against inquiry was 361 to 172. As for the peers, they would not entertain the subject at all. Lord Brougham laid the case before them in a strong and able statement; but they negatived it without a division.

The delegates met, and passed votes of thanks to Lord Brougham and Mr. Villiers. Among the hopeful speakers was Richard Cobden. There was no cause for despondency, he said, because the House over the way had refused to hear them. They were the representatives of three millions of people—they were the evidence that the great towns had banded themselves together, and their alliance would be a Hanseatic league against their feudal corn-law plunderers. The castles which crowned the rocks along the Rhine, the Danube, and the Elbe, had once been the stronghold of feudal oppressors: but they had been dismantled by a league; and they now only

adorned the landscape as picturesque memorials of the past, while the people below had lost all fear of plunder, and tilled their vineyards in peace. A public dinner at one of the theatres was offered to the delegates; but they were leaving town. They made no secret of why they were leaving town: it was to meet again at Manchester. The upholders of the corn-laws were quite at ease when they no longer saw the train of delegates going down to the House. Yet there were not wanting voices of warning which told them that the matter was not over. While one register of the time tells, with easy satisfaction, that the vote of the Commons 'had the effect of putting the question to rest, and no more was heard of it, during the remainder of the session,' another is found giving warning that the departure of the delegates was like the breaking up of a Mahratta camp—the war was not over, but only the mode of attack about to be changed. There was no secrecy about the new mode of attack. The delegates had offered to instruct the House; the House had refused to be instructed; the House must be instructed; and the way now contemplated was the grandest, and most unexceptionable and effectual—it was to be by instructing the nation. The delegates were to meet again at Manchester in a fortnight, to devise their method of general instruction, which, in its seven years' operation, approached more nearly to a genuine national education than any scheme elsewhere at work. By the Anti-Corn-Law League the people at large were better trained to thought and its communication, to the recognition of principles, the obtaining of facts, and the application of the same faculties and the same interest to their public as to their private affairs, than by any methods of intellectual development yet tried under the name of education.

The present was a time when minds were feverish, and disposed to undue alarm from any untoward circumstance; and the queen was made to bear her share of the uneasy excitement of the period. It was no wonder that, as all eminent persons are likely to occupy the visions of infirm minds, a young queen should be especially liable to the intrusions of the insane. It was no wonder to any-

body that one lunatic, having crept up to the garden steps of Buckingham Palace, should threaten her majesty because no Protestant should occupy the throne of England; nor that another, having leaped the enclosures at Windsor, should demand admittance to the castle as King of England; and so forth. But there were worse alarms than these, for two or three years. At first, there really was terror when a pistol was fired near the royal carriage, in the course of the queen's drives. Her popularity was by no means what it had been. Sometimes silence, and sometimes disagreeable cries, in the streets and the theatres, indicated this. The disheartened and suffering people could not understand how the prime-minister could properly conduct the public business while seen daily with the queen, or heard of at her parties; nor how so much money could be properly spent upon the queen's banquets and balls, while so many poor were starving; nor how the queen could enjoy festivities for six days in the week, while there was so much mourning in the land. When one pistol-shot after another was directed at the queen's carriage within two or three years, it was clearly proved in each case that there was no conspiracy, and no immediate working of political discontent; yet the general impression was that the odious act might not have been attempted in a season of prosperity and satisfaction. The first case, which occurred on the 10th of June 1840, was a type of the rest, and may serve for a notice of them all. A youth of eighteen or nineteen, named Oxford, who was foolish, if not insane, fired two pistol-shots at the queen in her phaeton on Constitution Hill. He was poor and ignorant; and it was so impossible to find any cause for the act, that he was pronounced insane, and given over to a lunatic asylum for life. On this first occasion, the excitement was so strong—'members of parliament applying for locks of Oxford's hair when it was cut off'—the whole aristocratic crowd in the parks escorting the queen home with cheers, and the affair appearing in capital letters in the newspapers for weeks, that it is not surprising that an ignorant person here and there, with a morbid longing for notoriety, should try to get it by shooting at the queen. This became so well understood

after a time, and it was clear that the risk to the queen was, at the same time, so nearly nothing, that such affairs were treated as they should be—as nuisances which might best be put a stop to by contempt and an ignominious punishment; and, during the next period, an act passed by which such a prank was punished by whipping, accompanying imprisonment or transportation. The most abiding incident connected with this first attack is one which it is now—and was yet more at the time—pleasant to note. At the top of Constitution Hill, the queen spoke to her husband, and the carriage, at his order, turned from the Hyde Park entrance down Grosvenor Place. The queen had thought of her mother, and went to her, that the Duchess of Kent might see that her daughter was safe before any other notice of the attack reached her. Of such attacks, no more mention will be made. The queen has no enemies among her people. Sovereigns who lead innocent lives and have no political power have no enemies among their people; and the pointing of a pistol at the royal carriage—a pistol, now without a bullet, and now without a lock—by some poor creature who courts arrest, is an incident of which this cursory notice is sufficient. The first occurrence of the kind, however, certainly did not tend to relieve the depression of the period.

Some accidents went to increase the gloom. There were several dockyard fires happening so near together, and so mysteriously, as to excite fears of treachery; but one proved to be from spontaneous combustion, and another from an accident. The storms were severe and disastrous; and one in the winter of 1839 was more like a tropical hurricane than a mere winter storm in our own seas. Twenty persons were killed in Liverpool streets, and a hundred drowned on the neighbouring shores. Dublin was like a sacked city—some houses unroofed, and others burning from the flight of sparks and brands. The repeal agitation was advancing in Ireland so formidably, that the lord-lieutenant publicly declared at this time, that he should oppose to it the whole power of the government; and that all countenance of the government should be withheld from those who took part in it. There had been a new, though futile rebellion in Canada.

As for the east, it required some courage to look that way. What a thoughtful man had been saying for years, that we should be compelled to conquer China, was now coming true. In the next period of our history we shall have to tell of the Chinese war which was now beginning. In India, matters were in a more fearful state still. The blow had not fallen yet—the blow which annihilated an Indian army; but it was felt that something terrible was impending; and in fact some very bad news was on the way. Under such accumulated gloom, destined yet to deepen for some time, it was a thought of comfort to the nation that the queen was safe in the honour and repose of a home; and it was a matter of general rejoicing when the blessings of that home were enriched by the birth of a daughter on the 21st of November 1840.

END OF VOL. III.

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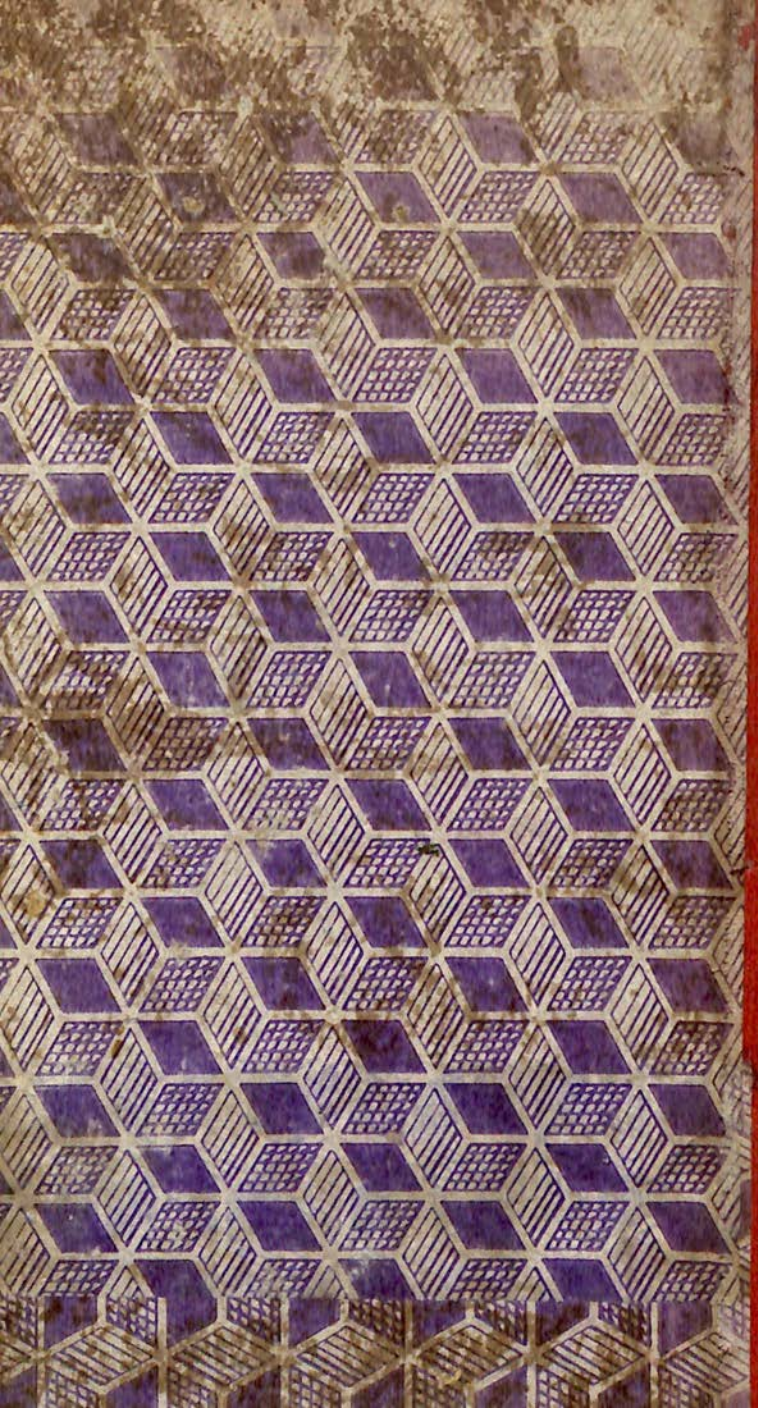
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